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PICTURES

OF

ENGLISH HISTORY.

For Junior Pupils.

BY

**WILLIAM FRANCIS COLLIER, LL.D.,**  
*Author of "The History of English Literature," "The Great Events of History," &c.*

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INTRODUCTORY TO THE AUTHOR'S  
"SCHOOL HISTORY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE."

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LONDON:  
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EDINBURGH; AND NEW YORK.

1864.





## PREFACE.

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I INTEND this little book to serve as an introduction to my "School History of the British Empire."

Written with the distinct object of being attractive to those young readers, who are as yet able to receive historical knowledge only in the pleasant shape of stories, it is characterized (as I believe every work written to attract the very young ought to be, more or less) by an idiomatic simplicity of language, and a free pictorial style.

The Scenes are described in chronological order; but, with a very few exceptions, I have avoided burdening the narrative with dates, or those minute details, which would make it continuous and complete. Whatever may be lacking here, can be easily found in books of systematic history.

I may state, however, that these Pictures will be found useful also in supplementing the descriptions, which the limited size and diversified con-

tents of a School History often render necessarily meagre; for, especially in dealing with the more romantic portions of English history, I have resorted to the narration of anecdotes and the accumulation of picturesque details to an extent, which would be unwarrantable in a School History, professing to narrate the *whole* story of the English throne and people.

A Table of English Sovereigns at the end of the book may be used to exercise pupils in elementary Chronology, if any should show an aptitude for remembering dates. By referring to this Table young readers will be able to perceive at once to what reign or century a certain Picture belongs.

W. F. C.

*July 1864.*

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PICTURESQUE INCIDENTS  
OF  
ENGLISH HISTORY.

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PART FIRST.

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I.

THE ROMAN LEGIONS IN BRITAIN.

ABOUT nineteen hundred years ago a Roman general was fighting against the brave savages, who lived in the country we now call France. His name was Julius Cæsar; he was a man of a pale face and a body thin with sickness. But in spite of his weak body he was very fond of war. When he had beaten the people of Gaul, he made up his mind to carry his soldiers over the narrow belt of salt water which divides France from England, or, to use the names of this old time, which separated Gaul from Britain. Many ships had visited Britain before this time, for the purpose of getting tin and pearls; but no army had ever invaded the country yet. It was not for tin and pearls that Cæsar intended to bring his soldiers into Britain, but that he might be able to tell the people of Rome, when he went back there, that he had conquered this distant place and added it to the great Roman territory.

The island of Britain was then one big forest, the home not only of yellow-haired men, who drew blue patterns, as sailors do, on their breasts and arms, but also of wolves,

wild boars, and white-maned bulls. The beaver built his curious house in the rivers, and large birds, called bustards, ran heavily in great flocks over the plains. As for deer, eagles, red foxes, wild cats, and other animals, which are now to be found only in desert places, where men seldom go, they ran and flew and burrowed everywhere. Along the southern coast the people wore woollen dresses of red plaid, and were fond of putting chains round their necks and having brooches to pin the folds of their tartan. They lived in houses made of rods tied together into the shape of a beehive or a sugar-loaf. Their religion, which was called Druidism, was a strange mixture of truth and falsehood, for while they knew there is a God, they worshipped the mistletoe and the serpent, and burned large wicker cages, full of men and women, in sacrifice to their gods.

Early one morning in August some of these Britons were standing on the rocks of white chalk, from which the coast of France can be seen, when they noticed a swarm of things like black flies on the very edge of the sea, where it seemed to meet the sky. The black specks were Cæsar's ships—galleys rowed by very many oars. As the ships came nearer, the poor Britons saw that they were filled with men in armour made of brass; and before very long the sharp snouts of the galleys were driven by the force of the oars in upon a sloping piece of sand on the coast of Kent. The Britons had gathered in a great army, on horseback and in wooden cars, to beat back, if they could, this attack of the dreadful Romans, of whom they had often heard terrible stories from merchants of Gaul. At first the Romans were afraid to leap into the sea and fight with the tall men of Kent. But an officer, seizing the image of an eagle, which was the Roman standard, jumped into the water and cried, "Follow me." In a moment the sea was filled with Roman soldiers, and a fearful battle began on the edge of the sand. The British chiefs threw away their plaids and whirled their long swords fiercely round their heads. But the Roman soldiers were drilled to fight in line, and, as soon as they had formed, they rushed forward with extended shields and plunged the short broad blades of their heavy swords into the defenceless breasts of the brave but untrained soldiers of the island.

Before sunset the Romans were digging the trenches, with which they always surrounded their four-cornered camps. During the short time—about eighteen days—which Cæsar spent in Britain, he was attacked more than once by the British cars, which came dashing in on the Roman ranks, ripping up with the scythes, that stretched like broad wings from the centre of their wheels; any poor wretch, too stubborn or too slow to jump aside.

Next year the great Roman crossed the sea again to Britain with ten times as many ships, carrying five legions instead of only two. He landed this time on a silent shore, for the natives had retreated to some distance from the sea. When he came in sight of the barricades they had formed beside a river, he hardly knew how to force his way, for large trees had been cut down and lay with their heavy trunks and thick twisted boughs before the only passage his soldiers could take. Cutting down more trees and carrying earth, the Romans raised a mound, which they climbed by creeping up all together in a dense swarm, holding their shields aloft so that the edges overlapped like slates on a house-roof.

The only man in Britain able to stand against Julius Cæsar was a chief called Cassibelan, whose *toun* or fortress of mud and sticks perhaps stood near the town of St. Albans north of London. We can picture to ourselves a giant man, dressed in a coat and trousers of red plaid and a short blue cloak of fine-spun wool, on whose breast glitters the *torc*, a rolled collar of gold, which was the sign of high rank and authority. We can follow him, as he strides, bronze blade in hand, down the dark avenues of oak, that surround the cavern, in which the Arch-druid or High Priest of the Britons dwells. We can fancy the frequent meetings of the old Priest, with his long beard of snow and his trailing white robe, and the impetuous Soldier, whose blue eye is all on fire, and who impatiently tugs the floating ends of his amber moustache, while the wise old Pontiff advises retreat and caution and delay. Such may have been the chieftain, in whom the hopes of the Britons now rested.

After Cæsar had spent ten days in mending his ships, which a storm had severely shattered, he moved on to the

Thames, whose current slid smooth and deep between him and the object of his march. Cassibelan, who was on the north side of the stream, had driven thick planks of oak into the muddy bottom of the river-bed, and had lined the approaches to the ford with similar rows of wooden stakes. But the Romans forced their way across in spite of these, and soon reached the town, where the British chieftain dwelt among the woods of Hertfordshire. Its timber defences were of as little use as the stockades by the Thames. The brass-coated legionaries broke through, and refreshed themselves after their hard fighting with unlimited meals of beef and mutton; for great herds of cattle had been collected within the British camp.

Cæsar was too good a soldier not to see that he might waste all his force to no purpose in victories like these. What was the use, he thought, of beating the islanders from bush to bush, when the cutting down of a few trees would make a fortress in a day, and they had always the dense untrodden forests to fall back upon, if the worst came. He accordingly went back across the sea to Gaul, and wrote in that famous Latin book—*The Commentaries*—which tells the story of his wars, an account of his two invasions of Britain.

The Roman soldiers did not come back to Britain for ninety-seven years. Then too there was a man like Cassibelan, but perhaps even a greater chieftain. The Romans called him Caractacus. When they had beaten him and killed his brother in the Essex marshes, he ran away to the mountains of Wales, and prepared to fight to the last for his country. The place he chose was very strong, being surrounded by high rocky hills, and defended in front by a deep swift river, rushing down in foam. Wherever there was any passage, through which the enemy might get, he had it blocked up with heavy stones. When the flashing of yellow light far down the glen showed that the Roman soldiers were coming to battle, Caractacus made a speech to the clans, that had gathered from all the hills around, and reminded them how their forefathers had driven Cæsar away. But what could the poor brave naked Britons do. In spite of all the heaps of stone, the Romans forced



their way into the camp ; and the soft copper swords of the Britons and their little shields of basket-work were hacked and hewed to pieces by the hard sharp steel weapons of the attacking force. When he saw that the blood of the Britons was flowing like water, and that the hollows among the rocks were filled with heaps of dead, Caractacus fled, until he came to the house of his step-mother, from whom he begged a lodging and some food. Pretending to be friendly, she gave him these, but took the earliest opportunity of binding his limbs with cords and giving him up to the Romans.

It was the custom of the Romans, when they got hold of any distinguished prisoner, to lead him before the chariot of his conqueror through the streets of Rome, which were filled with people in holiday dress and all adorned with garlands of flowers. The procession was called a Triumph; and, when the pageant reached the slope of the Capitoline hill, the captives were led aside and killed. For such a fate was the noble Caractacus reserved. Brought to Rome in chains, he was forced to walk through the shouting streets ; and, as he walked and looked around him with brave blue eyes, whose light was unquenched by suffering and captivity, he was heard to say with a wondering smile, "How can people who have such splendid houses here envy me a little cottage made of wood in Britain!" And, when he was brought before the Emperor Claudius, who sat dressed in gold and purple on a throne, his conduct was so noble, and his calm words of conscious rectitude made the monarch so much ashamed, that he restored the gallant but unfortunate soldier to freedom. We do not know any more about Caractacus.

A little later a British lady was daring enough to face and fight the Romans. Her name was Boadicea. While the Roman governor was away in the island of Mona, which we call Anglesea, engaged in destroying the Druids, who had fled to the oak forests there, this brave woman stirred up her people in Norfolk to war. She had good reason to make war against the Romans. Her husband, dying a little before, had left half his wealth to them in the hope, that they would let his widow and orphan girls live upon the rest. But the greedy

Romans took the whole, and whipped this queen of the Iceni with rods, when she ventured to ask for that which was her own. This was more than she could bear; and, when she drove in her chariot to a great assembly of British warriors, and, spear in hand, told them the shameful tale, they raised a yell of revenge and rushed off to burn the Roman towns and massacre the inhabitants. Seventy thousand were killed, before the governor Paulinus got back with his soldiers. And then of course there was a great battle. It was fought somewhere on the low shore of Essex. Paulinus placed his men with their backs to the sea; and the Britons in a countless swarm came on, thinking that they had got their dreadful enemy at last into a fatal corner. So sure indeed were the islanders of winning the battle, that they brought their wives and daughters to look on from a semicircle of cars, which bordered the edge of the plain. But the Romans, forming themselves into a body like a wedge, made so fierce a charge that they broke through the British line, and drove the fragments in terrible confusion back upon the cars. And then what a scene there was! Britons, with their blue breasts bare, and their yellow locks matted with blood, trying all that bravery could do against both bravery and discipline combined—women shrieking and wringing their hands, or discarding the fears of their sex in the horror of the time and rushing to grapple in deadly fight with the soldiers of the Legion—noise and slaughter everywhere—and everywhere the Roman sword drinking blood, and spilling life upon the grass. When Boadicea, who had come to battle dressed as for a splendid festival in a robe of bright colours, a loose flowing cloak, and a golden collar that matched the colour of her carefully combed hair, saw the slaughter of her people and the quick extinction of all her hopes of victory and revenge, she did what heathens thought it very noble to do, and put an end to her life by swallowing poison.

It was, however, not Julius Caesar, and not Paulinus, but a Roman general called Agricola, who really planted the Roman power firmly in Britain. Coming in the year 78 A.D. across the strait, he set to work at once both to conquer and to civilize. While he made the wilder tribes feel that Roman swords were sharp indeed, he taught the more peaceful

and submissive Britons to dress and dine in the Roman fashion and to cultivate the rose, the violet, the cherry, and the grape. In his seventh and last year he met a great host of Caledonians under Galgacus in battle on the Moor of Ardoch close to the Grampian Hills. In vain the brave savages of the Perthshire moors used their dirks and shook the hollow balls, which were put on the butt-end of their spears to frighten the foe with a loud jingling noise. The Romans killed 10,000 of them; and still on the hill close by may be seen two great cairns or heaps of stone, which probably mark the burial-place of the fallen brave.

In thinking of Agricola we must not forget that his ships discovered, or rather made certain of the fact, that Britain is an island.

Such is the story of the struggle, which ended in the Romans adding Britain as a province to their great empire. By building walls with towers across the narrow parts of the island, north and south of the Cheviot Hills, they shut the wild Caledonians into the forests of the north, and by making great paved roads through the southern half of the land they secured a way of reaching any part with their troops. But the making of roads and gardens was a trifling benefit in comparison with the introduction of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, a blessing which must certainly be assigned to the Roman invasions of our land. We do not know, who first preached Christianity in Britain; but it is very likely to have been some poor soldier or grave centurion of the Legions, who had read those wise and faithful words, written to the Romans by St. Paul, or had perhaps heard the aged prisoner in his own hired house, telling the gracious tale of infinite love, which he was never too weary to repeat and enforce, with a weak voice indeed and a stammering utterance, but yet with an earnestness and fervour, that told every one who listened that what the old man was saying *must* be true.

## II.

**HOW THREE KEELS BECAME EIGHT KINGDOMS; OR,  
THE STORY OF THE TEUTON SETTLEMENTS.**

THE story commonly told about the first arrival of settlers from the German shore is so romantic and amusing that I cannot help relating it, although many call it a mere fable.

Some years after letters from Honorius, the Emperor of Rome, had recalled the few Roman soldiers that remained in Britain, there came to the coast of Britain three *keels* or ships, filled with men called Jutes, who, in addition to the usual swords and spears, carried axes and great steel hammers, for slicing and smashing hostile skulls. Their leaders were called Hengist and Horsa: and their banner bore the figure of a large white horse. They came just at the right time. A struggle for power had been going on between a British chief and a Roman chief, and the former was in great need of help. They helped him; but not for nothing. Their request indeed seemed a modest and almost a silly one, for they asked him to sell them as much land as might be covered by the skin of an ox. But the meaning of the thing appeared, when the chieftains drew their knives, slit the hide into many narrow thongs, and enclosed with these as much ground as afforded room for the building of a castle. Vortigern was fairly outwitted in this transaction, but he paid many visits to Thong-caster, as the stronghold was called. During one of these visits, while wine and mead were flowing freely, a very pretty fair-haired girl called Rowena, the sister of Hengist, knelt down before the British chief, and offered him a cup of wine, saying, as she placed it in his hand, "Dear King, your health." It is said that he was so enchanted both by her great beauty and the winning kindness of this action that he entreated her brother to permit her to marry him, and offered, as a sort of bribe, to make over Kent to the Jutes, if Rowena became his. The sacrifice of so fair and

fruitful a piece of land did not please the British people, who not being in love with Rowena, could see with clearer eyes than their King. They rose in rebellion under Vortimир, the son of the enamoured old chieftain, and in the war, that followed, the Jutes were severely beaten and for a time driven from the land. But Rowena, who remained behind at the British court, to fascinate and direct Vortigern, could deal with other cups than those of wine. She poisoned Vortimир, and secured the recall of Hengist. He came back, resolved to try stratagem again. A conference, intended to settle all disputed points, was agreed upon; and to it Vortigern, expecting nothing but a drinking-bout, went with three hundred of his officers. There was drinking indeed; but, when the mead had confused the brains and enfeebled the arms of the British, a signal-shout from Hengist of "Unsheathe your swords," caused all the Jutes to start to their feet, and with short blades, which till now had been hidden in their hose, they murdered every one of their guests except Vortigern, who was more useful alive than dead. At once the British King yielded up Essex and Sussex, but he did not live long afterwards, for we are gravely told, fire came down from Heaven and burned him with all his family, as a punishment for his sins, both personal and those that were against the nation he had betrayed.

Gradually settlers from the German shore spread themselves along all the flatter portions of the English coast and eastern river-basins, forming seven or eight kingdoms.

The great hero of the British struggles against these foreign inroads was Arthur, a King of south-western Britain, whose capital was Camelot in Somersetshire, and on whose banner was embroidered in gold the image of a dragon. He founded the Round Table, an order of knighthood including the best and bravest soldiers of his realm, and to them he set an example of nobleness, purity, and valour, which has caused his name to be remembered ever since with reverence and admiration. In his home he was not happy, for his wife Guinevere was, with or without her own consent, carried off from him by a prince called Maelgoun, and it took a year of hard fighting to bring round the treaty which restored her. The death of Arthur has been dressed up by the old ballad-

writers with all kinds of magical and unreal incidents; and our greatest living poet, Alfred Tennyson, has followed their example in writing about this ancient King. They tell us, for example, that when Arthur was wounded in his last battle, and lay almost dead, he commanded a faithful knight, one of the last survivors of the Round Table, to take his sword Excalibur, whose hilt was all starred with precious stones, and to fling it out into the middle of a lake that lay near. The knight went, but returned without having done what he was told. With all the sternness the wounded King could muster, he uttered the command again; and the knight went down among the reeds to the water's edge, and flung the sword out with all his might. It went wheeling through the moonlit air, but, before it could splash upon the surface, an arm clothed in white rose from the bosom of the lake and seized the hilt; and then a barge came floating over the lake with three ladies in long black robes, who took the dying King on board and carried him off to Fairy-land. It was a favourite belief among the superstitious peasants of Britain, whenever they felt the oppression of their conquerors very keenly, that King Arthur would soon come back to set them free. The most likely account of Arthur's real end seems to be, that he fought a battle at Camlan in Cornwall with his nephew Modred, who had stirred up a rebellion, and that, being mortally wounded on the field, he was carried by sea to the Abbey at Glastonbury, where he died.

The conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to the religious belief taught at Rome, is said to have happened in this way. There was a famous pope called Gregory the Great, who, before he was raised to the chair of St. Peter, had been filled with a desire to rescue the inhabitants of Britain from idolatry. One day in crossing the market, where slaves were sold, he saw some very handsome boys, whose red and white complexion, golden hair, and soft blue eyes took his fancy at once. He asked who they were, and, being told that they belonged to a nation called *Angli*, he cried out, "They are not *Angli* but *Angeli* (that is angels). And from that hour he formed a resolve to work for the conversion of that race of beautiful pagans. It was not, however, until a letter came from Ethelbert of Kent, who had married a Christian

wife, that the first missionaries left Rome for the distant island we live in. The journey was long, and the danger of going among the wild islanders seemed very great; so Augustine and his forty monks turned back to Rome in fear. Gregory insisted that they should start again for Britain; and they accordingly passed through France and crossed the narrow sea to Kent. The Kentish peasants were quite as much surprised to see the olive-cheeked Italian priests, as these priests were to see the smiling fields of a land, in which they had expected nothing but forest and heath. By and by a meeting between the King and the missionaries was arranged, and a very splendid scene it was, as most of the ceremonies of the Roman Church are purposely made to be. In glittering dresses the monks walked forward at a slow and solemn pace from their dwellings to a place, where the King and Queen sat on thrones in the open air. The sound of their voices, chanting Latin psalms, was heard, sweet and low in the distance, and then, as they came near, swelling into the full strong peal of manly music. When they came in sight, it was seen that a picture of a Man, bleeding on a cross, was carried before them, and that each long-robed foreigner held a silver crucifix in his hand. Nothing could be kinder than the way, in which Ethelbert received the strangers, and, as soon as they declared the object of their coming, he gave them houses to live in and money for their regular support. Nor was it long, until he yielded to the quiet influence of his wife Bertha, and was baptized into the Church, of which Augustine was a missionary.

There is much romantic incident in the story of King Edwin of Deira, under whose sceptre Northumbria was converted to the faith of Rome. Driven from his throne by a usurper, this prince wandered about the middle of England for a long time, and then waded through the fens that border the Wash, until he found, as he thought, a safe refuge in the wooden palace of King Redwald in East Anglia. Redwald promised to protect him; but the faith of the host, who was very avaricious, was undermined by an offer of some gold from the usurper, who had taken Edwin's place. His fear too was excited by a threat of war in case of refusal. One night Edwin was just preparing to go to bed in Redwald's

house, when a friend came in and told him, that men had come from Northumbria to buy his death, and were at that moment under the same roof as sheltered him. Alarmed and perplexed, he dressed himself, and went out into the dark, where he could not be seen, and, sitting down upon a stone, which was opposite the palace door, he fell fast asleep. In his sleep he had a wonderful dream. A tall majestic-looking man seemed to come and ask him, what he was doing there in the dark alone, when everybody else was in bed.

"How does that concern you?" said Edwin to the ghost?

"Ah," said the kingly figure, "what would you give to the person, who should save you from your present danger and restore you to your throne?"

"I would give everything I possess in the world," said Edwin.

"Would you obey a being, who might be able to teach you the sure road to happiness here and hereafter?"

"Yes," said Edwin, "I would."

"Then," said the shadow, putting its hand on the prince's head, "remember this sign, and, when it is given to you, remember to keep the promise you have just made."

Almost at the same time within the house Redwald's queen was engaged in persuading her husband not to shed the blood of his guest Edwin. Overcome by her strong entreaties, the Anglian King chose to engage in a war rather than stain his hands so infamously, and, going out to battle on behalf of Edwin, he won on the banks of the Idel a great victory, which resulted in the death of the Northumbrian usurper and the replacing of the lost crown on the head of the wandering prince.

A dark-haired Christian monk, Paulinus, came from Kent to be the chaplain and confessor of Edwin's second wife, and to him is ascribed the introduction into Northumbria of the religion he professed. He worked on Edwin's superstitious feelings by going in one day and laying his hand on the King's head, a very transparent trick, since the story of the vision must have been well known. Edwin was just then a good deal impressed and softened by a narrow escape from assassination. A person, pretending to be an ambas-



sador, had rushed on him with a sword, and but for a faithful nobleman, who flung himself before the point and received the thrust, Edwin would have been killed. To hack the villain to pieces took the guards but a few seconds. The first Northumbrian that was baptized was the baby-daughter of Edwin; and soon after her admission into the Church, the high priest of the heathen service took an opportunity of showing how little he cared for the temple, in which he had been accustomed to conduct a false worship. It was the law in Northumbria, that priests should neither ride on horses nor carry spears. In order to defy the idols he had served Coifi mounted a horse, and, taking a spear in his hand, galloped to the enclosure of the temple and flung the weapon in. Convinced by the fact, that no punishment followed so daring an outrage, the people ran to get torches, and soon the heathen temple was in a blaze. A large wooden church was built at York, and there Edwin was baptized.

Penda, the pagan King of Mercia, hated Edwin, because he had yielded to the preaching of what seemed to his bloody mind a weak tame superstition, and he also envied the peace and plenty, which distinguished the kingdom of Northumbria. Accordingly, raising an army and getting the King of Wales to help him, he fought with the army of Edwin in the pine forests of Hatfield, where Edwin's head was carried from the battle-ground stuck, like a ghastly poppy, on the point of a Mercian spear.

But Penda was only a fierce warrior; one of his successors, Offa, King of Mercia, was both cruel and crafty. The worst of Offa's crimes was the murder of Ethelbert, commonly called a saint, but really a pious King of East Anglia, that is of the plain between the Wash and the Thames. Offa had several very lovely daughters, with one of whom the East Anglian King fell in love. The young lady returned his passion; and the princely lover, having sent her some rich presents, came to visit the court of Offa for the purpose of completing the arrangements for the marriage. We have then a story somewhat similar to that of Macbeth as told by Shakspeare. The guest arrives—a noble, young, and very handsome man. The fair princess brightens and blushes with love and happiness; and after the Saxon fashion the evening is spent in

carousing. When the guests have cut their slices of roast beef from the spits, while kneeling slaves offer them the smoking joints, the mead and wine go round the board ; and the harpers, playing on an instrument of five strings, sing the deeds of old heroes and the praises of the gallant bridegroom and the pretty bride. Amid all this feasting and apparent joy Offa and his wife, who was quite worthy of her cruel husband, have a black thought deep in their wicked hearts, and their plans are all laid. Presently Prince Ethelbert grows tired, and bids good-night to all the lordly guests. His sleeping-room is splendidly hung with silk and tapestry ; and there stands an easy chair, heaped with soft cushions, and inviting him to rest his tired limbs. He gladly sits down—and finds himself hurled to the bottom of a deep hole, where men smother him with the cushions, on which he had been tempted to recline. The poor girl, whom a cruel father and a most unnatural mother had thus deprived of her lover, ran out into the darkness, and found her way through the woods to a monastery, where she arrived with bleeding feet and soaked dress, and where she spent in sorrowful prayer the rest of her life.

The sister of this poor stricken lamb underwent a very different fate. Her name was Eadburga : and she too was beautiful, but it was with the beauty of the tiger or the coral-snake. Married to a King of Wessex, she used poison to kill all who interfered in any way with her pleasure, and a fatal cup, which she had mixed for a courtier she disliked, by some mistake was given to the King, her husband, who drank and died. She had been cunning enough to provide for such a result by gathering great sums of money, and with these she sailed to Germany, where the great Emperor Charlemagne welcomed her both on account of her father's fame and her own beauty. In his dominions she became abbess of a nunnery, but acted so basely that she was expelled. Travelling then to Italy, she sank lower and lower, had at last only one slave left to wait on her, and, losing even this attendant, was forced to end her days in Pavia, a wretched, sick and hungry beggar—a most righteous conclusion of her wicked life.

## III.

## THE DEEDS OF KING ALFRED THE GREAT.

THERE was a race of men, commonly called the Danes but more correctly known as the Norsemen, who affected the history of all Western Europe, and especially the history of England, to an immense extent. They were something of the Saxon type—fierce fair-haired warriors, whose eyes darted blue lightning, and whose chief weapons were the axe and the war-hammer. Their favourite plan was to push up the rivers in their light vessels, which were painted and gilt to represent dragons, and so to penetrate a land very deeply and ravage it very cruelly. When they came to a town, they killed the people, carried off the wealth, and burned the houses to the ground. They carried a banner, on which the image of a huge raven was displayed in dark and terrible colours. They had a particular grudge against the Saxons, because the latter for the most part had abandoned heathenism for a certain form of Christianity.

The man, who most bravely and successfully fought against the Danes, was born about sixty years after they began to plunder the English shore. He was Alfred, the son of Ethelwulf and Osberga, and is celebrated in history as Alfred the Great. Few kings, who have borne that additional name, have deserved it so well.

From his earliest days Alfred showed signs of ability far beyond what is common. A story is told of his childhood, which, though not certainly true, may find a place in this book of historical stories. One day his mother, or rather his step-mother, showed Alfred and his brothers a book of Saxon poetry, bordered and adorned with very beautiful paintings or illuminations, as they were then called, and promised to give the precious manuscript to whichever of the boys would repeat the poetry best. Alfred, aged about six, won the prize with some help from his tutor.

But, when Alfred came to the throne in his twenty-second

year, he ran the risk at first of souring and displeasing his subjects by ruling them too harshly, and forcing new laws too violently upon them. For this reason it was that, when the Danes made an attack by sea upon the southern shore, there were very few men, who cared to help Alfred in beating them back ; and so the young monarch was driven from his throne to hide himself among the woods and marshes of Somersetshire. This piece of temporary bad fortune did good both to him and to his people. It softened the sternness of his nature, and allowed them time to forget his early harshness. His hiding-place was the Island of Athelney, a little patch of ground covered with alder trees. A bridge was built over the stream, and here the King lay, hidden but not forgotten, for a whole winter. It was while he lived in this miserable condition that he found his way one day into the cabin of a man that herded oxen. The man was out, but his wife welcomed the wanderer, and invited him to sit down and warm himself at the fire of logs, that crackled in the centre of the clay floor. Alfred, who was dressed in the common clothes of a peasant, took out his knife and began to shape a part of his bow that needed trimming. The woman asked him to see that the cakes, which were baking on the fire, did not burn ; but he was either too tired, or too much wrapped in thought, or too much devoted to the shaping of his bow, for, when she turned again to look, the bread was black and smoking. Little dreaming that she was scolding her King, the herdsman's wife poured out a torrent of shrill abuse, and told the culprit that, although he was lazy in watching the cakes, she was sure he would eat them greedily enough, when they were baked.

When the news spread quietly among the Saxons of Wessex, that Alfred was living in the swamp of Athelney, the young men gathered secretly round him ; and, when the white blossoms of the hawthorn came out, he left the island with a little army of brave men. Before engaging in battle, he is said to have taken the very dangerous step of going in a minstrel's dress into the camp of the Danes and playing there, until he was invited to feast with the chief. All the evening he played and sang most skilfully, and the unsuspecting Danes talked in the pauses of the music about

their plans and their contempt for the conquered Saxons. His ear, though he did not seem to listen, caught every word of the boastful talk, which was all the truer and less guarded, when the mead began to affect the soldiers' brains. When the revel was over, the minstrel stole away to the little Saxon *bivouac* in the forest of Selwood, and there made his arrangements for a dash upon the Danes. Next day he managed to place his men between the Northmen and their camp, which was a round or oval inclosure high upon a hill. It was sunset before the battle was decided. The Danes ran away up the sides of the hill and hid themselves in their camp, where for a fortnight, but no longer, they held out against the assaults of a Saxon army, which grew larger every day. By the battle of Ethandune, as the first encounter is called, Alfred regained the throne of Wessex.

Alfred, although tortured by an internal illness, was a most active man. Having invented time-candles, which burned down one inch every twenty minutes, and having then made lanterns of horn to keep the draughts from blowing out the lights, he divided his day into three equal parts, one allotted to business, a second to study and worship, and the third to rest and recreation. After a short sleep under a goatskin quilt he rose with the earliest dawn of summer to his work. A short prayer and a scanty breakfast were his first concerns. After spending some hours in the business of the State, he would mount his horse, and gallop off into the forest after a wild boar or a red deer. Then came dinner and a sleep, after which some more official work was done. The evening was given to study, dictation, or literary conversation.

We have seen how Alfred suffered in Athelney and triumphed at Ethandune. He inflicted another great defeat upon the Danes before he died. There came to the shore of Kent a fleet, that seemed numberless, consisting of more than two hundred ships, and its chief was the great Hastings, the best known pirate of his day. The Danes landed, and, by forming great intrenched camps, succeeded in holding their ground for a long time. Their principal station—and their last—was at Ware upon the Lea, whence they threatened London on the north. Alfred came on them at a time,

when they were just preparing to reap a field of corn, which some Saxon farmer had sown, but upon which all the summer they had been casting covetous eyes. We can faintly imagine their rage, when they saw one half of Alfred's force lay down their spears and set to work with sickles on the grain. The reaping, the binding, the carting were calmly and securely done, while the Danes looked on in helpless rage from their strong intrenchments, which were utterly useless in this case. Alfred knew well that the Danes depended chiefly on their ships, and that to render these useless would be like robbing Samson of his hair. Secretly, therefore, but ceaselessly he set diggers to work upon the banks of the stream, who trenched the land in two long channels, parallel to the natural bed, in whose waters the Danish fleet was floating. When all was ready, he cut a way for the river to flow into these artificial troughs, and thus rendered the stream so shallow that the ships ran aground and fell on their sides, useless and incapable of being stirred by wind or oar. It was a fatal blow to the pirates, who abandoned their works, and, scattering over the country, got home with difficulty next year in some leaky ships, which they managed to borrow from the Danes of the eastern coast.

Five years after this skilful achievement, Alfred died, to the intense joy of the Danes, whose hopes of conquering England revived, and to the lasting sorrow of the Saxon people, who had received more benefit from this sick man than from any of their previous Kings.

## IV.

## FIVE PICTURES FROM THE LIFE OF DUNSTAN.

THERE used to be upon a hill in Somersetshire, lifted high above a region, which winter made a waste of floods and summer turned into a steaming swamp, a vast monastery which owed its foundation to a colony of Irish monks. It was the Abbey of Glastonbury, where the bones of Arthur were buried, and where his guilty Queen Guinevere, if tradition tell the truth, had previously found a place to hide her humbled head. There we see a boy at study in the school; his loose dark dress girt carelessly about him, and the missals and parchments, which supply food to his unresting brain, scattered in every direction round the solitary worker. Other boys are playing in the orchards, or begging dainties in the Abbey kitchen; but little Dunstan pores on and on over the crabbed text-hand of a grimy roll, taken from the bottom of some worm-eaten chest in the library, until his vision swims, and, with a shower of sparks dancing before his darkened gaze, he falls heavily from his seat in a swoon. His sleep-walking and his studies have ended in a brain fever.

NIGHT has darkened down upon the weather-beaten timbers of Winchester Church. There is no moon in the sky, and clouds obscure the light of stars. But from the lower part of the cathedral wall, almost on a level with the ground, a ray of light streams out with flickering current, sometimes glowing red like a dull carbuncle, sometimes flashing with the lurid blue of a sudden lightning burst. And, as the belated dweller in some neighbouring house passes by with short quick step and beating heart, he hears the ringing of metal and the hoarse cries of a man, who seems to be struggling with a demon. It is Dunstan, who dwells in that miserable cell, dug deep below the ground. And all night long he beats iron on the anvil, and keeps time to the swinging of his sledge with the hoarse chant of

psalms and the dreadful music of shouted maledictions. A fever of another kind, brought on not by study but by love, has driven the monk to solitude, and thus he is earning the reputation of a saint.

The great Chapel of Glastonbury is crowded with monks and priests in dresses of many hues—candles gleam on the lofty walls—censers swing out clouds of blue perfumed smoke—the golden vessels devoted to sacred rites, and the crucifixes of ivory and silver glitter in costly array upon the altar. It is evident that some imposing and gorgeous ceremony is in progress. Prominent in the crowd of churchmen is a face we have seen before—still young, but darkened with a manlier beauty than it used to wear, and clouded by no traces of that weak and morbid brain, which affected it in earlier days. It is Dunstan assuming office as Abbot of Glastonbury. In the estimation of his age his accomplishments were such as adorned the post. He possessed a handsome face, a fluent tongue, a rich and cultured musical talent, and was also skilled in the casting of bells, the painting of glass windows, and the carving of crucifixes. Aided by such qualities and acquirements, he rose step by step at court, until he secured influence over the very crown itself.

Edwy the Fair, a King and bridegroom of eighteen years, received the crown from Archbishop Odo one day at Kingston-upon-Thames. A table was spread with the profuse plenty, which pleased the Saxon appetite, and great flagons of mead and wine were placed at frequent intervals along the board. There sat many churchmen of various degrees, and there sat Dunstan too. The coronation had gone slowly off, and at least to Edwy the feast seemed tedious and prolonged. It was natural the handsome youth should find it so, for the ceremonies of the one and the riotous wassail of the other had kept him all day long from the society of the beautiful Elgiva, his young wife. When he saw that the drinking had begun in earnest—and drinking was carried then to a shocking excess—Edwy quietly left the hall, and hurried away to the presence of his wife and her mother, who sat with their embroidery in one of the bowers of the palace. On entering the bower,



the tired King took off his crown and rolled it away upon the floor, weary both of its weight and of the tedium it had cost him that day. But he was hardly settled in his seat, when the door burst open, and two churchmen came unsteadily in, to ask him in the name of Primate Odo why he had dared to leave the hall, commanding him at the same time in most ungentle tones to return instantly to his place. This was too much for a King to bear; and Edwy answered their insolence with haughty scornful words. But mead had got to Dunstan's brain, and with a hand—which practice with the sledge had endowed with an iron grip—he seized the slight figure of the King, put the rejected crown upon his head, and dragged him by main force back to the banquet room, now noisier than ever. The picture would be incomplete without the consequences of this fatal tumult. Edwy, stung by furious rage, demanded from Dunstan an account of royal treasure, committed to the Abbot's care, and, when he refused to give it, drove him by military force out of the Abbey into exile in Flanders. Poor Elgiva was pursued with pitiless cruelty by Odo, who got her branded on the face with an iron dish reduced to a white heat, and then banished her to Ireland. And, when she came back, cruelty worked a more dreadful crime upon her by cutting the sinews of her knee joints, and leaving her to die. Edwy lost half his kingdom, and soon lost his life also.

A great dispute arose between Rome and the English clergy; and in this dispute Dunstan was the leading champion of the Papal power. The strife hinged chiefly on the right of priests to marry, as the national priesthood of England had always been used to do. In this struggle Dunstan, now made Primate of England, took the part of the Benedictine monks; and it was to be expected that he should, for in early life he had flung aside the love of a beautiful girl, because it was likely to interfere with his ambitious schemes. The great assembly to debate this disputed point was held in the town-hall of Calne, which lies in one of the chalk valleys of Wiltshire. We can easily imagine the building of rough planks, with a tiled roof and a stone foundation, which then represented an English town-hall.

And we can see the troop of nobles and churchmen, that went up the broad ladders, which led into what we would consider a mere loft. There go Earls and Thanes, wearing over their woollen coats, that reach the knee, long cloaks, lined and edged with the fur of the marten. Above their black shoes, split from the instep to the toe, the cross-garter of leather runs from ankle to knee, and through the overlapping thongs shines the bright red or blue of the hose below. And there in a greater crowd, with shaven heads and long embroidered robes, with crozier and with crucifix of rare device and precious material, go the Prelates and Abbots, who represent the contending parties in the Church. The long low room is almost filled with all the noblest and most learned men in Britain, met in the assembly known as the Witenagemot. An eloquent bishop from Scotland speaks in defence of the opinions held by the national clergy, and then Dunstan, who stands at one end of the chamber, surrounded by his adherents, gets up to reply. He works himself into a tremendous passion, and after one passage of great excitement, calls on Heaven to punish the impious men, who oppose the course he wants all the clergy to adopt. At that very moment a loud crash is heard, and, when the dust has somewhat cleared, it is seen, that one half of the floor has broken down below the opponents of the Primate. There among the fragments of the wood lie bleeding bodies, quite dead, and many sufferers, whose limbs are broken or bruised. It was a master stroke of wickedness, for few can doubt that the joists of the flooring had been tampered with by Dunstan. He was used to playing tricks, though never before had his clever malice done such bloody work as this. Some time earlier at Winchester, during a debate like that of Calne, he called out to a figure of the Saviour, which was hanging from a cross on the wall, and *it spoke* some loud words in his favour. To the poor ignorant nobles and priests, who heard it, this seemed a voice from Heaven. But we, who know the tricks of ventriloquists, and the fact that Dunstan had studied art and science far in advance of his age, can easily account for such flimsy miracles as this.

## V.

## HOW A DANE OBTAINED THE ENGLISH THRONE.

THERE was a Saxon King, who was called by the strange name of the Unready. His true name was Ethelred. He was one of those silly people, who are always doing the wrong thing, and who, if you give them ever so much time and opportunity to prepare for coming danger, will be found at last only beginning to look round them, when the danger has actually come. During all the days of Dunstan, in fact ever since the death of Alfred, the Danes had been darting upon England, and burning, killing, robbing, without mercy or cessation. Ethelred gave them money to go away; they went for a short time, but then came back in swarms ten times as great, roaring that they must have more. And although they got more, they often did not go, but remained living in the houses of the English, eating and drinking of the best, and treating the people, who really owned the place, like dogs or the lowest slaves. And these arrogant pirates would go strutting about in dresses of scarlet and blue, with shields all gilt and much gold ornament on their axes and helmets. If a Saxon met them, they would knock him rudely from their path, or, if he ventured to resist, they would cut him down, as we switch the head off a weed sometimes as we pass it by. It forced itself upon the mind of Ethelred, that the payment system would not do any longer; and he then thought of a still madder and more hopeless plan of getting rid of these cruel and oppressive intruders. From London letters were sent secretly to all parts of the kingdom, desiring the Anglo-Saxons to prepare for a day of blood. Every Dane in the land was to be killed on a certain day; and the words "every Dane" meant not only the fierce and arrogant men, who had lately come over the sea to plunder, but thousands of peaceful and well-conducted Danes, who had long been settled in quiet farms and village trades in every part of the country. There was much secret joy at the

bloody news, which flew like wild-fire everywhere, and the Anglo-Saxons took care to sharpen the points and edges of their blades against the coming of St. Brice's Day, November the 13th, 1002, which was the time chosen for the commission of this huge and hideous crime. The day came, and the work was done. Men killed their sisters' husbands—their brothers' wives. Little babies, torn from their Danish mothers' convulsive clutch, were taken by the feet and dashed against the door-posts, until their brains were all spattered upon the wood. Some Englishwomen, who had married Danes, were buried alive or cut with knives in the most dreadful manner, and left to bleed to death. There was one Danish lady, the sister of King Sweyn, who saw her children and her husband killed and, as she was led out herself in London to die, said her death would be dreadfully and quickly avenged. She was right. Sweyn came across the sea with many ships, and for years the land was filled with the terrors of the most dreadful war. Even Ironside, the brave son of the Unready King, could not save the throne of the Saxons from being overturned, and a Danish kingdom was set up in its room.

Of King Canute or Knut, as his name is sometimes spelled, there is much to be read in English history, where he is often called the Great. He was certainly the only one of our three Danish Kings worthy to hold a sceptre. But I shall give just three glimpses of him as a King.

An old archbishop, whom the murderous axe of a Danish soldier had struck dead, was buried in the cathedral of St. Paul in London, and the presence of his mouldering bones within the walls seemed to the superstitious citizens a safeguard for their city. It so happened, that the monks of Canterbury wanted to have the saintly bones removed to their city, and prevailed on Canute to allow the removal. He not only consented, but agreed to take a share in the ceremony himself. The time came, when he was in his bath; but he hurriedly wrapped a cloak about him and ran off to the church. The stones of the tomb, previously loosened of course, seemed to drop out of their own accord, and the body was taken from its resting-place. In the meantime the attention of the Londoners had been drawn off

by a pretended riot, and nearly every one had run off to see what was the matter. A large boat, adorned with gilded images of dragons, was waiting on the river to carry across the remains of the archbishop, and, when all was safe on board, the King steered it across with his own hand. And then a car received the relics, and bore them to Canterbury, where they were received with music and rejoicing. The people of London were very angry at what they considered a robbery, which might bring misfortune on their city, but Canute did not care, for he had done it to please the monks, who were by far the most powerful class of people in Europe at the time.

We get a notion both of the splendour and the boldness of this Danish King, by watching him as he makes a pilgrimage to Rome. The pilgrimage was so common in the Middle Ages that almost every one went to pray once a year or so at the shrine of some saint or martyr. But the grand journeys were to Rome and to Jerusalem. Canute had shed so much blood, that he imagined the encouragement of monks and the building of churches not enough to cleanse his soul from its red stain. He accordingly set out in the usual grey frock, and with a staff in his hand went walking away to Rome. He brought plenty of money with him, and, when he stopped to rest for a night or a week, as it might be, at the monasteries, which then served the purpose of inns, he always left behind a good sum to be spent in the decoration of the shrine. He gave freely also to the poor, and bought the liberty of many captives. And, when he came to that footstool of St. Peter's chair, where the monarchs of the Continent were used to lay their crowns low in the dust before a fellow-creature like themselves, this rough manly northern King, whose life had been spent in fighting with wave and wind at sea, with foemen worthy of his steel by land, spoke boldly out against the great extortion practised upon English archbishops, when they came to Rome to receive the sacred cloak or pall. Other benefits for English pilgrims and peddlers—the two classes of travellers who then visited the Continent—he had already gained from the Emperor and other monarchs by his intrepid speech and straightforward manner.

There is a story so closely connected with the name of Canute, that no denial by modern historians can quite remove it from our minds, and, as it has its own good lesson in itself, I cannot do better than give it here. It is known as the anecdote of Canute and the Waves.

The courtiers, who surrounded Canute's throne, were in the habit of flattering him to his face with the most extravagant statements, in a way which could not but disgust and enrage a sensible man. Living at one time by the sea, perhaps near Southampton, he was told by some of them, that they firmly believed him to possess a godlike power over the waves, which they said would roll back at his command. He resolved to rebuke them in a most decided and effective way, by putting their foolish words to the test. Accordingly he had a chair brought out on the sand and placed within the tide-mark, when the waters were flowing in. Sitting there, he called aloud to the sweeping sea, and commanded it to go back. It still flowed on, nearing his chair with every successive wave. Again he called, yet still it advanced. At last a wave washed round his feet—the next wet his leg—and before many minutes the sandy sea was tossing and boiling around and beyond his chair. He then turned to the crestfallen courtiers, and said words like these, "None but Almighty God can say to the waves of the sea, 'Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.' The power of an earthly King is most frivolous and vain compared with His." And then we are told he took the crown from his head and sent it off to Winchester, that it might be placed, in remembrance of this lesson to liars, above the thorny crown, which bound the brow of the image of the Saviour.

## VI.

## THE STORY OF THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

A DUKE of Normandy went out one day into his deer-park at Rouen to hunt, and, as he was standing with an arrow on his bowstring, ready to shoot at any stag which passed within range, a messenger came running hastily to him with most important news from England. Edward the Confessor was dead, and Harold the Dauntless, son of the great Earl Godwin, had been proclaimed King. Now Duke William of Normandy—the man with the bow in his hand—expected, that he would become King of England for two reasons. One was that the dead King had promised him the English crown, when they were boys together in France; the other, that Harold had promised to help him in securing this prize, and—the monks said afterwards—had sworn an oath over a hidden tub of saint's bones that he would do so. The news, therefore, of Harold's accession was a most mortifying blow to William, who flung away his bow, and, going into his palace, muffled up his face in a cloak and lay down on a bench to fret and to think. He did not fret long, for he formed the determination of invading England without delay and fighting for the crown, which he regarded as his undoubted right. And so through all the spring and summer his men prepared ships, spears, swords, armour, and everything necessary for so great an undertaking.

Another invasion of England by Tostig, Harold's own brother, and Hardrada, the giant King of Norway, who was seven feet high and had at one time been a guardsman at Constantinople, preceded that of William, and afforded him a favourable chance of crossing the Channel. The Norse fleet sailed into the Humber and up the Ouse; and after securing York the army took post at Stamford Bridge on the Derwent in a region of "brown heath and shaggy wood." Harold offered terms to his brother, upon which there came a message to know what would be given to Hardrada, if a

compromise was agreed to. "Seven feet of English earth for a grave," said Harold the Dauntless ; and so all chance of a peaceable arrangement was gone.

The Norsemen were arrayed in the form of a crescent moon, with a few horsemen placed at each horn. Hardrada, dressed in blue and wearing a gilt helmet, rode on a strong black horse, in command of one of the wings. So great was the heat of the weather, although it was late in September, that many of the Norsemen came to battle without their breastplates—a fatal mistake as it turned out. For the English horsemen charged and charged the curving hedge of spear-points, until they broke it in, and then the Norsemen were driven back in confusion to the narrow wooden bridge, that crossed the river Derwent. Here there was a check, for a tall Norwegian with an axe in his hand straddled across the centre of this confined passage, and cut down every English soldier, who tried to make his way across in pursuit. At last this stout warrior fell. There being none bold enough to climb the heap of cloven corpses, that lay piled before his feet, a man got quietly into a boat, and floating under the bridge, ran a spear through a crevice in the planks right into the body of the giant, who fell, mortally wounded, into the stream. This decided the fate of the Norwegian army, which was so completely defeated as almost to realize the usual words of exaggeration, in which we describe a force as being "cut to pieces." Four days after this terrible battle had been fought, a fleet of ships with sails of many colours brought 60,000 men across from Normandy to the coast of Sussex. Duke William in a galley, whose figure-head was the golden statue of a boy with an ivory trumpet at his lips, had shot ahead of the slower vessels of the fleet during the previous night. Running into Pevensey Bay, he caused a great number of archers, who were shaven as close as possible and wore short light coats, to leap ashore, and spread out as skirmishers, while he got the heavier troops and all the materials of the expedition out of the ships. While the archers ranged all the country round, looking out for the enemy, the knights and their horses disembarked, and stood on the English shore beside their steeds, with their helmets on and their shields



slung ready for action round their necks. Men like these, clad in chain-work made of steel rings, formed the principal strength of an army at this period. Besides an army William with wise precaution had brought over food and fodder; and the carpenters, dragging some planks and barrels full of wooden pins from the holds, set to work at the erection of a wooden building, which held and protected the stores for the war.

When Harold, who was at York, heard of this landing, he hurried to the south at once, and took up a position at Senlac, about eight miles from Hastings, where William had raised two more forts of wood. It would have been better for him, had he delayed until the full strength of the English force had gathered: but he was so delighted with his victory at Stamford and so confident in his own power that he resolved to fight at once. A spy sent from his camp had lurked about the edge of the Norman lines for some time, and, seeing vast numbers of shaven men going about, had come back with the news, that the invader had brought over a band of monks more numerous than his soldiers. This mistake, for it was the archers that the spy had seen, emboldened Harold still more. And so the Saxons took a good supper and sat by their watch-fires, drinking ale and singing songs, until they were all quite drunk. The Normans, more temperate and more cautious, spent the night in fasting and religious employments, so that they rose with clear heads and strong limbs.

Harold's army, scarcely 20,000 in number, was firmly posted on the slope of Senlac Hill behind a barricade of ash-wood and osier. They had a gorgeous banner, on which was embroidered the figure of a splendid soldier, but they had not half enough weapons for their hands. There were many peasants, who had nothing except pitchforks or poles of wood sharpened to a point. Duke William, who had sought the blessing of the Pope on his enterprise, took care that his soldiers should see that they were fighting under the shadow of a sacred banner, no less splendid than the English flag. In his hurry to get ready on the morning of the battle he had put on his hauberk, with the back where the front ought to have been, and his attendants, always on

the watch for signs and omens, had begun to look alarmed, when he called out, "It is no matter; it is a good sign, for to-day a Duke shall be changed into a King."

And then the battle of Hastings began. In front of the Normans rode a gaily-dressed minstrel, singing warlikesongs. He had obtained from the Duke the honour of striking the first blow, and accordingly he drove his lance-head through a man, but his weapon was scarcely free, when a mortal blow cut him down. It was in vain that the Norman horse plunged up the hill upon the Saxon lines. Standing steadily together, the Englishmen hewed away with their bill-hooks at the attacking squadrons, and at last hurled them down the hill, at the foot of which many of the jaded horses went neck and croup into a deep gully filled with brambles and thorny shrubs. Just then a spear killed Duke William's horse, and, as he fell stunned to the earth, a cry arose that he was dead, and the Normans began to run away. But he sprang up, got a fresh horse, took off his helmet that his troops might know him, and with his brother the Bishop, who rode a white horse and fought with a mace, galloped into the crowd of fugitives, and with blows, entreaties, and commands turned them back to the fight again. A lucky thought then struck him. He made his bowmen shoot up into the air in a slanting direction, so that their arrows fell from above upon the heads of the Saxons; and thus many skulls, unprotected by helmets or iron caps, were pierced. Among the victims of this method was King Harold, who received an arrow in his brow above the eye, into the ball of which the point forced its way. He tore out the shaft and leant his face upon his shield. But his fighting was done; and, whether it was this wound or others received in the final struggle round the Saxon flag that caused his death, he had expired before the roar of battle was silent on the plain. The closing fight was near the golden banner of Harold, round which a few of the bravest English soldiers had gathered, after a pretence of flight on the part of the Normans had drawn them from their impregnable position on the hill. Twenty Norman knights swore that they would reach the centre of this ring or die: and with one furious charge they broke it in, and hurled the glittering banner to

the dust. This and the death of Harold secured the victory for the Norman Duke. The battle was fought on a Saturday, and on the Sunday morning the field was covered with weeping pale-faced wives and mothers, who were looking among the dead for their dear relatives. One of the searchers was a Saxon lady—Edith of the Swan Neck—with whom Harold had been in love, and no eye but hers could recognize the features of the fallen King beneath the clotted blood and dust, which covered the face of his corpse. At first the body was buried in the sand of the sea-shore, but at the earnest entreaty of his aged mother, it was taken up and placed under the pavement of Waltham Abbey.

This great battle of Hastings was one of the turning-points in English history. It placed upon the throne of England a race of French Kings, who continued to reign until the death of Richard the Third. But long before that time all traces of French dominion had disappeared; and, although the English Kings were still called by a French surname—Plantagenet—they were quite as English in spirit and in manners, as the nation over which they ruled.

Although the battle of Hastings gave the crown to William, there was a great number of Saxons, who resisted his usurpation; and the story of the Norman Conquest cannot be considered complete without some account of the fortunes of these gallant but unhappy men, who still fought and plotted for the restoration of the Saxon sceptre.

An East Anglian chief called Leofric, whose lordship was Brun, had a son named Hereward. The people of this district were worse than the old Spartans in the rough hardihood, to which they reared their children. A common practice was to take a boy by neck and heels and heave him up on the sloping thatch of a cottage—to try his strength and tenacity. If he managed to cling with hands and knees in that perilous position, he was considered worth keeping: if he fell, he was obliged to go and seek his fortune beyond the bounds of East Anglia. Trained in such a way, there is little wonder that young Hereward grew up fearless and daring; and in these qualities he so surpassed his companions that he gained the victory in all athletic sports. For, if it was wrestling that was going on, and he

was tripped and thrown, he would spring up sword in hand, and change a friendly contest into a bloody duel. Such conduct turned several against him, and he got into so many difficulties with the neighbours, that his father was forced to ask Edward the Confessor to make the troublesome pugnacious boy an outlaw. So Hereward left his home, and lived the life of a wanderer in Northumbria, in Cornwall, and in Ireland, until at last he passed over to Flanders, and there he plunged with reckless bravery into war. But he seemed to carry some talisman, which turned aside or blunted the spears and arrows, that were levelled at his life.

His valour was so remarkable in an age of great fighting men that songs were composed in his honour, and his praise was sung by minstrels, when they struck their harps in the castle-halls after supper. When the news crossed to his native place, that the high-spirited boy, who had been driven away, had become a great hero of war, there was much joy at the prowess of an Englishman, not unmixed with shame at having treated him so badly. Old Leofric was very glad and proud to hear of his wayward son's success. But various things kept Hereward from returning home, until after the Norman Conquest had been achieved, and among other changes had transferred his dead father's estates to a French knight named Taillebois.

Hereward came back to find this foreigner installed in his own house, and lost no time in raising a band to drive the intruder out. But the Frenchman was aided by all the force of the Conqueror, so that Hereward was obliged to form what was called the Camp of Refuge in the Isle of Ely, a place so entirely surrounded with bogs and fens as to be secure from almost any attack. Sensible that a man, who wishes to rule others, ought to possess the outward rank and semblance of authority, required by the fashions of the age he lives in, this outlawed soldier went to his uncle the Abbot of Medehamstede on the Nen, and demanded to be made a knight. The ceremony was completed in the usual way, with the midnight vigil in the church, and the application of a sword to the neck of the candidate. For the offence of knighting Hereward, Abbot Brand would have been expelled by the Conqueror; but he died in time to defeat Wil-

liam's intention. A Norman monk was then sent to preside over Medehamstede; but the men of Ely managed, before he came, to seize all the gold and silver in the Abbey, and carry it off to their camp among the reeds. The new Abbot then sought the aid of Taillebois, and together they went on what is familiarly called "a wild-goose chase," to hunt for the plunderers in a most intricate collection of swamps, all overgrown with willows and tall bulrushes. While Taillebois was beating the ground, or rather the mud, in vain, Hereward, who knew every inch of the district, suddenly appeared before the bewildered Abbot, as he was prudently waiting on the edge, and carried him off a prisoner to the central Camp, from which he did not get free until he had paid a heavy ransom. Movements so audacious brought William the Conqueror in person to the scene. With the quick eye of a man used to warlike expedients, the Norman King saw that the only hope of success lay in making a solid road across the swamps and pools, which defended the Camp of Ely. It was a very difficult task in itself, and in the face of active foes, who burned the works and killed the workmen, it was tenfold more so. When a man gave proof of more than common power in those days, he was supposed to have made a league with wicked spirits, who helped him in the hope of destroying his soul. Hereward was thought to be a magician; and so a witch on a wooden tower was pushed out on the growing embankment, that her spells might defeat, or render useless those of the Saxon chief. The reeds were set on fire by the English, and the flames, catching the tower, burned the witch and the workmen together. Matters seemed hopeless, when some treacherous monks of Ely offered to show a secret path through the fens into the Isle, if their convent were spared. Along this winding way a file of Normans passed, and attacked the camp so fiercely as to slay a thousand of its defenders. When Hereward saw that his wooden walls were pierced and taken, a tradition tells us, that, with a few chosen companions, he splashed and waded through the bogs, until he came to the banks of a Lincolnshire stream, where some Saxon fishermen were sitting in their boats, having just made a successful haul with their nets. Finding that these poor men were going

to sell their fish to some Norman knights, stationed not far away, Hereward resolved to try a stratagem. He and his men lay down in the bottom of the boats, and were covered by the fishermen with straw. The latter then rowed on, until they came to the place where the dainty Normans were waiting for the first course of their dinner. The fishermen went up to strike a bargain, and, while the talk was going on, out sprang Hereward and his men with their battle-axes, and set upon the knights, some of whom did not stay to be killed, but fled on foot from their sudden foes. The horses of the Normans proved very welcome to the tired hero and his men, who rode off rejoicing in the success of their plot. It is said that Hereward afterwards married a rich Saxon lady, and died in his bed. But there is another story of his end, so accordant with his whole life of chivalrous adventure, that it cannot be omitted here, although it is probably a fable invented by the minstrels. One hot day, having put off his armour, he lay down to sleep under a tree, when twenty Norman knights came stealing down to kill him. Some noise they made awoke the sleeper, who caught up a short javelin that lay at his side, and stood gallantly at bay. Fifteen of the twenty bit the dust before the fatal point of the little pike; and when the hero, gashed and bleeding, had sunk on one knee, he slew another, who came too near, by dashing the boss or central projection of his shield so violently against the poor wretch's skull, as to shatter bone and brain together. Then the four lance-heads of the four survivors met and crossed in his unconquerable heart, which bled out its last drops upon the grass.

The tyranny of the Conqueror fell heavily on his Norman nobles as well as on the conquered Saxons. A conspiracy was therefore formed during one of his visits to the Continent; and from the circumstances of its formation the plot has been named *The Bridal of Norwich*. The Earl of Hereford was anxious that his sister Emma should marry the Earl of Norfolk, and Emma was not averse to the match. But the Conqueror, who had reasons of his own for disliking the union, peremptorily forbade them to think of such a step. While he was away, the marriage took place at Norwich; and at the feast, when wine had heated the

brains and loosed the tongues of the company, men spoke angrily about William's oppressive and vindictive dealings with his subjects in both France and England. Roger of Hereford spoke boldly out; and Waltheof, the Saxon Earl of Northumbria, who was a very timid man, in spite of his tall manly figure and fine face, promised to take a part in the intended outbreak of rebellion. The rebels, when they rose, displayed no skill, and were easily routed by Lanfranc, the Italian Archbishop of Canterbury, who was acting as Regent for William, and who inflicted on the prisoners he took the dreadful punishment of cutting off one foot. William came back resolved to deal severely with all concerned in the Bridal. Roger of Hereford was put in prison, and so was Waltheof, although he is said to have borne witness against his accomplices in the plot. It did not suit the Conqueror to kill Waltheof at once. But after a year in jail, this Saxon Earl was brought out early one morning, while the citizens of Winchester were asleep, to a hill near that old capital of England, and was there desired to prepare for death. He begged a little time for prayer; but took so long, that the headsman struck him on the neck with the great two-handed sword, as he was lingering over the words of the Lord's Prayer. It is said that he had reached the words, "Lead us not into temptation," when the blow came sweeping down, and that the other half of the petition was uttered by the twitching mouth of the head, as it fell upon the ground. The death of this Saxon noble closed the story of the Norman Conquest of England.

## VII.

## A FATAL ARROW AND A FATAL ROCK.

A SON of the Conqueror, who received the name Rufus from the red colour of his face, ruled in England for thirteen years. The mysterious and romantic circumstances of his death have kept his name in a remembrance, which his living deeds most certainly did not deserve. For he was a cruel and licentious drunkard, without a single quality about him which could make his subjects like him and be sorry for his loss.

Like all the nobles and princes of that age, he spent a great deal of his time by daylight in hunting deer and shooting them with arrows, and was especially fond of the New Forest, which his tyrannical father had made by ruining churches and burning villages over a space of thirty miles. A curse seemed to cling to the unholy trees: the country people told with terror tales of the wild unearthly shrieks, which often rang out from the dark glades at night; and twice death had seized a descendant of the Conqueror within the skirts of the hunting-ground. The third and greatest tragedy was now to take place, and Rufus was to be its victim. Having come on a memorable 1st of August to Malwood Keep, which stood on the borders of the Forest, William, after the usual revelry had overcome himself and all his drunken courtiers, staggered to his sleeping-room and lay down in a stupor on his bed of straw. In the dead of night a scream and a cry for "Light" broke on the ears of his drowsy attendants. They rushed into the room, and found Rufus, with a white face and shaking limbs, sitting on the side of his couch, and scarcely able to speak for the terror of a dreadful dream. So frightened was he, that he would not let them go away, but kept them by his bed to wile away the time by stories and jests. Soon after day broke, a man, who was called a fletcher or arrow-maker, brought him six new shafts, with which he was so much



pleased that he bought them; and, keeping four for himself, gave two to his friend and fellow-sportsman, Sir Walter Tyrrel or De Poix. The Norman dinner hour was nine in the morning; but perhaps a hunting party would take an early meal at seven or eight. At any rate, there was more wine drunk at table than there should have been; and the noise had grown very loud, when a messenger came all the way from Gloucester to tell the King that one of the monks of St. Peter's Abbey had dreamed that he would die by a sudden and dreadful death.

"Give him a hundred pence to have better dreams," cried the tipsy King. "Do they think I am such a fool as to put off my sport because an old woman happens to dream or sneeze. To horse, Walter De Poix!"

So to horse they went; and with much blowing of bugles and barking of dogs the cavalcade galloped into the forest, where they broke up into sets of two and three. Tyrrel and the King kept together. Towards sunset their dogs roused a stag, which darted off among the trees. Rufus quickly took aim; but the string broke, and the arrow fell short. The stag stopped an instant, startled by the noise; and the King, whose eyes were dazzled by the evening sun, lifted his hand to shade them from the red glare that slanted through the trees. "Shoot, Walter! shoot!" he cried with an oath. And just then Tyrrel, hidden in the brushwood, launched an arrow from the string. As it flew among the jostling trunks, it struck one, glanced aside, and stuck quivering in the left side of Rufus, which was uncovered by his lifted arm. Without a groan Rufus fell dead. The knight sprang from his horse with a pale face, and rushed to raise his lord; but, when he saw that the shaft had pierced the heart, with that instinct which acts for reason at a time like this, he got on horseback as quickly as he could, and galloped away to the sea-shore, where he found a ship to carry him to France. While the red light of the setting sun was still in the forest, the body was found by a charcoal-burner called Purkess, who lifted it, all soiled with blood and clay, into his cart, and jolted away with it to Winchester, where it was buried in the cathedral choir.

Henry, the brother of Rufus, then took the English crown;

and upon his life so dark a shadow fell by the loss of his eldest son, that it seemed as if the sufferings of the conquered English people were being revenged upon the conquering race. As was usual with those Norman Kings, Henry I. considered Normandy of far more importance than England, and spent a good deal of his time in war with the French King. The dreadful accident, which so greatly grieved him, happened just at the conclusion of one of those French wars. He had reached Barfleur, the great Norman sea-port, and was going on board a ship, whose sails were being shaken out, when a man in sailor's dress came before him, and, offering the present of a golden coin, said—

“It was my father who steered the ship, in which your father sailed for the conquest of England. Sire King, I beg you will allow me to do the same for you. I have got a fine vessel called the *White Ship*, in the best of trim and rowed by fifty able oarsmen.”

The King could not go himself, for he had chosen his vessel already, but he agreed that his son Prince William, a lad in his eighteenth year, and I am sorry to say, not of the best character, should take his place and sail to England in the *White Ship*. Henry then went on board his own barque and sailed over a smooth sea before a pleasant breeze to the English shore, which he reached next morning. The Prince stayed behind with a number of gay companions to dance and feast on deck. Very foolishly they gave the sailors three casks of wine, which made the men drunk and reckless. At last, when the moon rose and lit up the sea as if it was a great sheet of trembling quicksilver, the ropes of the *White Ship* were let go, and she darted away from the shore with her load of three hundred lives. Captain Fitz-Stephen stood at the rudder, steering, and the fifty rowers, aided by the swelling sails above, made the vessel leap along the waves in the moonlight like some swift white bird skimming the surface of the peaceful sea. The Prince and his friends cheered on the oarsmen, who pulled with all their might. In the midst of the excitement a dreadful crash was heard, and a shock was felt, which shook every timber of the ship. Rowing without caution through a channel, all jagged with sunken rocks, they had driven the ship at full swing on one

of these sharp teeth that lurk below the sea, and some planks of her side were broken in. When the dreadful truth flashed on the minds of those on board, and the water came rushing in through the hole, a piteous cry of despair rose up through the air from three hundred voices, so bitter and so keen that it was heard like a faint wail by those who had sailed hours before and were far out at sea. Fitz-Stephen put the Prince and a few more in the only boat he had and bade them row ashore. But the boat was scarcely turned, when William heard the screams of his half-sister Marie, who had been left behind, and at once he desired that an effort should be made to rescue her. The boat went back to the wreck—a fatal step, for as it neared the sinking ship, almost every one on board made a rush into it, and it upset, casting all—Prince, sister, and companions—into the deep sea. Two men, a young nobleman and a poor butcher, got hold of a floating spar and were clinging there, when the captain swam over to ask, if they had seen the Prince. No sooner had Fitz-Stephen heard that none of the royal party had been even seen above water after the swamping of the boat, than he gave a cry and sank to rise no more. The hands of the nobleman grew so powerless with cold that he let go and sank after holding on for some hours. And of all the gallant company and crew, that feasted on the deck so merrily as the sun of yesterday was setting, there was now alive only one—the poor butcher, who was saved from death by the warmth of his shaggy sheepskin coat. A fishing-boat picked him up next day, and he told the dreadful tale. For three days the King wondered where the Prince had gone, for no one at the court could find courage enough to tell him of the wreck. At last a little page, crying bitterly, fell at his feet and told the news, which struck him down like a sudden shot. Although he recovered from the swoon, he rose an altered man, and was never seen to smile again.

## VIII.

## THE BATTLE OF THE STANDARD.

IN the reign of King Stephen, who was the grandson of the Conqueror, a battle was fought between the Normans and the Scotch, which is known in history as the battle of the Standard, and which deserves a place here not only for its picturesque incidents, but also because it was the first occasion, upon which the Norman lance and Scottish broadsword crossed in battle.

King Stephen's claim to the English throne was denied by Matilda Plantagenet, the daughter of Henry I. and the widow of Count Geoffrey, whose name, meaning "Heather" or rather "Broom," came to be the name of more than a dozen of our Kings.

King David the First of Scotland, although a very quiet monarch, more given to building abbeys and cultivating flowers than shedding blood, came three times into the north of England to fight in behalf of Matilda against the soldiers of King Stephen. The third invasion brought him into the north of Yorkshire. All was fright and hurry among the English farmers and monks, who dwelt in that part of the land, for the approach of the Scottish King had been so swift that there was no time for Stephen to reach the scene of action. But an old Archbishop of York collected an army; and it was a strange force, whose leaders were principally clergymen. In order to give an appearance of religion to the muster he got a four-wheeled car, and, tying strongly to its centre the mast of a ship, he placed at the top of this pole a large cross, under which, spreading like wings on each side, were the banners of three Saxon saints—held in great reverence in that part of England. Their names were St. Cuthbert of Durham, St. John of Beverley, and St. Wilfrid of Ripon. In the centre of the cross was set a silver box, containing that little cake or wafer of bread, upon which the blessing of the priest was supposed to bestow a sacred and

mysterious substance in the administration of the Sacrament. Round this standard, which gave a name to the battle, the English army gathered on the moor of Elfer-tun or Northallerton. There were two kinds of fighting men in the English army—Norman knights, dressed as usual in steel armour and equipped with lances and swords, and Saxon yeomen, armed with long bows and arrows a full yard from point to notch. This battle indeed was the first prominent appearance of the English archers on a battle-field; and to their strong true shooting the victory was in great part owing.

The Scottish army was made up of very different kinds of soldiers. Following the bunch of heather on a lance, which was the only attempt at a standard they boasted, came a few knights and men in armour, a body of Lowland pikemen in breastplates, a number of archers from the dales, and a whole rabble of undisciplined and half naked men from Galloway and the Highlands, the former carrying long thin brittle pikes, the latter armed with claymores and leathern targets.

The Galloway men so troubled King David by their clamours for a front place in the battle, that he was forced to allow them to begin the attack. And so on they went through a fog towards the position of the other army. There happened to be in David's camp at the time two Normans, connected as owners of land with both Scotland and England, and therefore very anxious to bring about a peace. They bore the great historic names of Bruce and Baliol. Having tried all they could to turn David from the war, they took horse, and rode away to the camp at Northallerton to announce the approach of the Scots. It is a strange combination of two names, which later years saw connected in a very different and more conspicuous way with the history of Scotland. When the Bishop of Durham, who acted as commander of the English force, heard the news, he gathered his men round the standard car, from which he read a prayer and made a speech. And scarcely had he finished, when through the mist were heard the shouts of "Alban," "Alban"—the Highland cry of war. Then the torrent of wild excited men came streaming on in a furious rush. For a moment the solid array of the Norman knights,

who had dismounted and were standing round the banner of the saint, reeled and broke, but it was only for a moment. They soon closed again round the car, and on each side of the circle they formed stood the stalwart Yorkshiremen with their strung bows, sending the grey-goose wing thickly from their sounding strings into the crowd of Celtic warriors, who had no cover for their breasts except the plaid of their country. When the Highlanders, who were like French soldiers in this respect, failed in a rush such as that they made on the knights, they retired in confusion like a wave that had spent its strength and broken itself upon an opposing rock. But wave after wave flowed on; and the two-handed claymores swung, and smote on the Norman armour, until the noise of the battle came to resemble the sound of smiths hammering on a thousand ringing anvils. For two hours this hopeless work went on, until nearly all the Scottish spears were snapped and swords were bent or broken in the unequal strife. Then, and not till then, did the northern warriors pause. But, when they found that, if they fought any more, it must be with splintered sticks and the hilts of broken swords, and when they saw heaps of plaided corpses, pierced by arrows which stuck up from the bloody field as thick as reeds by a sluggish river, they turned and fled. The lance and armour had beaten the broadsword and the plaid; but the Norman knights and men-at-arms had learned how hard a Scotsman smote with his wheeling blade, and with what a brave devotion he could pour his life out in fighting the battles of his King. We may suppose that many of the clergy hit hard blows in this famous fight. The mace was the weapon they used. It was a club with a head of iron, sometimes smooth and sometimes spiked; and the reason, why the clergy liked and used it, was that the laws of the Church forbade them to shed blood. The mace would *only* break a limb or batter out a brain, so that their consciences were quite satisfied by wielding it upon the field of war.

## IX.

## LEAVES FROM THE STORY OF BECKET.

THE romance of Becket's story begins before his birth. It is said that his father, who was called Gilbert Becket and who was born at Rouen, went to the Holy Wars as the retainer of some Norman chief, but had the misfortune to fall into the hands of the Saracens. He was placed in a dungeon, by no means a comfortable dwelling in any land, but still less so in a torrid land. The handsome Christian, however, caught the eye of his keeper's daughter, who fell so violently in love with him, that she gave him the means of escape and so he got safely home. She, left behind in solitude, found that she had lost her heart completely, and resolved to follow the soldier to England where he lived. She knew only two words—his name *Gilbert*, and *London*, the name of the city he lived in; but this scanty amount of English, or rather French, served her purpose as well as a whole dictionary full of words. By crying *London* in a seaport town, she found a ship bound for that port. She had of course plenty of Saracen gold to pay her passage; and so the first stage of her difficult task was accomplished. London was then a small place—smaller even than what is called the "City" now; and the dark-skinned girl passed through its streets, calling now and then for *Gilbert*. The well-known voice caught his ear; he recognized his preserver and faithful lover; and on her admission by baptism into the Christian Church they were married. Thomas Becket, Chancellor of England and Archbishop of Canterbury, was their eldest son.

I pass by his childhood, youth, and rise in the Church, that I may reach the pictures, in which he stands prominently out upon the pages of English history. His father, who at first prospered in mercantile life, was Mayor of London. Thomas went to school and college, but tasted adversity too, when his father failed and he was obliged to work for

a time as a common clerk in the office of Master Eightpenny. Entering the household of the Primate, he climbed by rapid steps to influence and fortune.

The high Court of the King is sitting at Christmas time in a hall of the palace. Ten o'clock in the forenoon is the hour, but the dinner-table is spread with the relics of what was a magnificent and sumptuous repast. There are the skeletons of many geese, dressed with the favourite flavouring of garlick. There are hacked joints of venison and pork ; broken fragments of waste-bread and simnel-cake, on which can still be seen traces of the cross, stamped on them by the pious cooks. But the eatables have lost their charm, except for the crowd of beggars who whine and squabble at the door. The lords and clergy seated round the board have already had several cups of that Malmsey wine, which the servants in waiting have brought in jugs from the well-stored cellar. The company is very aristocratic indeed, comprising all the noblest names in England ; and we must not be led by appearances to mistake for inferiors those finely dressed persons, who have squatted down in all the finery of their tight red hose and furred cloaks upon the green rushes, which carpet the fresh-strewn floor. They are lords and members of the Court, who have come too late or in too great numbers for the accommodation afforded by the seats, and so they are sitting, eating, drinking on the floor, with the long curled toes of their fashionable shoes sticking up in most beautiful cork-screw twistings. At the head of the table sits a tall and comely man, whose dress and manner both betoken a person of considerable importance even among the greatest nobles of the land. It is Becket, the merchant's son, risen at the age of forty-seven to be Chancellor of the kingdom, and controller of the royal purse. Business of state is not quite forgotten in the circling of the wine-cups, although sometimes angry words and looks are exchanged by those who differ in opinion, and it often needs all the Chancellor's authority to keep swords from leaping out of their scabbards. Suddenly a blowing of horns and the clatter of horse-hoofs are heard without ; and clanking steps sound upon the creaking stair. The opening door, flung back with a hasty hand, lets in a red-haired man, whose



grey eyes move quickly and merrily round the company, to whom he nods with a familiar manner. He is not tall, and somewhat square and solid in his build. That he cares little for the niceties of life we may gather from the loose bagging of his ungartered hose and the unwashed hands, all red with cutting up a dead stag, from whose side he has pulled that very arrow he is holding in his blood-stained hand. This is Henry Plantagenet, King of England, come to preside in the great Court of his kingdom. But the King is in a merry mood to-day, and he will take his pleasure first. Business may come, if it will, at a later period. So Archdeacon Becket, who will do anything to please his royal master, has to sing a gay drinking song, and, tucking up his sacerdotal robes, whose length is unfavourable to the exercise, leaps upon the table, and, to the infinite danger of the glass-cups that jingle as he springs, dances to the music of his deep melodious notes. Nothing will then content the King, whose anxiety for his Chancellor's comfort is most praiseworthy and very sincere, but that the largest tankard in the place shall be filled with strong nut-brown ale to appease that thirst, which violent singing and dancing must produce; and with his own royal and condescending hands he holds the vessel to Becket's lips and pours the entire contents down the churchman's throat. Becket coughs, to be sure, and his eyes fill with tears in the middle of the draught; and perhaps his choking sends a foaming jet into the face of his Sovereign; but then you know that is only his way of expressing gratitude and a loyalty, which even a gallon tankard cannot quench.

A circle of Dutch pikemen, aided by numerous English and Norman knights, lay round the city of Toulouse in the south of France, where King Henry was carrying on a war. All the sights usual in a mediæval siege were to be witnessed on the banks of the Garonne at that time. Within the walls were heaps of resin, tow, and pitch for burning the machinery of the besiegers. Rams with iron heads, or cats with iron claws butted or tore at the city walls. Springalds, as the large fixed crossbows were called, shot flaming arrows from the ramparts at those great wooden towers, many stories high, in which bodies of soldiers were moved close up

to the turreted edge of the wall. Large pieces of rock whizzed through the air, and arrows darted from deadly strings, whenever a head appeared. In such a scene we now behold Becket, with helmet on and cuirass laced, galloping on a strong charger at the head of seven hundred lances—no longer, as we would say in modern talk, the Very Reverend Archdeacon Becket, D.D., but Colonel the Hon. Thomas Becket of the Canterbury Light Dragoons.

But Becket the Ambassador outshone in splendour Becket in every other phase of his career. There being on the carpet, as we say, a marriage between a Prince of England, aged seven, and a Princess of France, aged three, Becket was sent over to Paris to make arrangements for the betrothal. The procession of his journey was remarkably splendid, causing the people of France, as he passed through their villages, to say, "What sort of man must the King of England be, when his Chancellor travels in such state." First came on horseback a crowd of richly dressed pages, singing English songs. Then a pack of fine hounds in couples, and a number of falconers, bearing on their wrists long-winged hawks. After these came eight large waggons, containing the dress, golden plate, ale, pots and kettles, and mass-books, which the great man might need during his stay in the French capital. A dog was tied to every carriage. Every horse had a separate groom to lead him : and another class of pets, the taste for which has now quite disappeared, might have been noticed in the twelve apes, that curled their long tails above the backs of the twelve sumpter-mules. Esquires with shields—knights in armour—priests in cassock and cowl preceded the lordly Chancellor himself, who came near the end of this gorgeous string amid a small circle of those noble enough to be intimate with so great a man.

When next we see this splendid Ambassador the cloth of gold is gone ; the music is silent ; and the glittering train of servants and retainers has shrunk into a few pale priests in sordid robes of brown or grey serge. What is the meaning of so great a change ? How does it come that the magnificent man, whom we lately saw the centre of a gorgeous procession, surrounded with everything that betokened luxury and pomp, is now bending his bare knees on a pave-

ment of cold wet stone, and with his own hands, no longer loaded with heavy golden rings, is washing the dirt from the feet of some poor diseased beggars, and drying them with the skirts of his own robe, below which may be seen peeping the edges of a haircloth shirt? This sudden and wonderful change is the result of Becket's elevation to the throne of Canterbury. Standing now on the highest pinnacle a churchman can reach in England, he has resolved to change his mode of life entirely in order to win for himself the fame and honours of a saint.

The King and Becket had a quarrel about the rights of the clergy, whom Becket wanted to have tried only by the Courts of the Church. Some articles, called the Constitutions of Clarendon, were drawn up by the lawyers of the King for the purpose of settling the disputed points, and Becket showed himself unwilling to sign the Charter. He gave a sort of promise to do so, and then drew back. But the sight of some soldiers, whom the King had collected in an inner room for the purpose of frightening the obstinate clergy, made him again unwillingly consent to sign, and he rode away with a copy of the deed. Shutting himself up to brood over the promise he had made, he fell very sick and took to his bed. He was lying there, when he heard that the Bishops, on whose help he had counted, were all gone over to the King's side, and were saying that he ought to be deprived of his archbishopric. He took a decided step. Although he was very weak and ill, he rose from bed and dressed himself in all the rich and glittering robes, which then belonged to the position he held, and, taking a great crucifix in his hand, he rode to the gate of the palace. With this crucifix still in his hand, he walked with his long robes sweeping behind him up to the very foot of the throne, where the King was sitting. With looks of anger and scorn, which the Archbishop was not slow in returning, the King got up and went with all his lords into another room, where they began to talk about the affairs in dispute between the crown and the clergy. Becket, left outside, sat down upon a bench to wait among a few poor priests, who were either too insignificant to be admitted to the other room, or too fond of the Archbishop to desert him. Still he held the

crucifix and sat waiting. The door opened, and out came the Bishops, who, one by one, told him to his face that they no longer acknowledged him as Primate, and would obey none of his commands. He looked quietly at them with a curling lip, but spoke not a word in reply. Then the Barons came to announce, as the result of their consultation, his sentence of imprisonment. He could keep in his anger no longer. He told them that they had no right to imprison him, and that he would submit to no one but the Pope. When he rose to go, they began to call him names and curse him, while some of the angriest picked up handfuls of rushes from the floor, and flung them at him, as he went to the door. Then he turned and cried to the foremost knight, "If I were not a priest, De Broc, and so unable to bear arms, I would soon prove you in single combat to be a liar." Feeling that his life was in danger, if he stayed at Northampton, where this scene occurred, he put on the dress of a common monk, called himself Brother Dearman, and, by riding all night and hiding all day, got safely to the port of Sandwich, where he found a ship going over to Flanders.

Six years of exile had passed, when a ship bore Becket back to England. He had made a sort of reconciliation with the King, but it was hollow and unreal on both sides. And he had scarcely reached Canterbury, when he issued letters of excommunication against adherents of the King, who were his own worst foes. When Henry heard of this in France he spoke some rash words, which seemed to show that he wished for the death of the "turbulent priest." And four knights, who were near him at the time, crossed to England in a little while and went one winter day into the palace of Canterbury. Becket must have known well the meaning of the four stern and silent figures, that entered his room and sat down upon the floor before him. At last one of them spoke, to make a demand, which only drew an angry refusal from the courageous prelate. They rose and went out for their swords. He heard the sweet voices of the choristers, who were singing the vesper hymn, and went into the church. When the knights came back, they found the doors shut, but they climbed through a window and made their way into the church, which was already

filled with the shadows of the winter evening. Becket, when he heard them coming, took his stand beside a pillar near the altar. As they approached, they called out, demanding that the letters of curse should be recalled. He cried with a loud fierce voice "Never," upon which one of them made a sudden stroke at him with a sword. It would have killed him, only that the man, who carried the cross before him, suddenly held up his arm to ward off the blow, which nearly cut the limb in two. The second blow was better-aimed, for it brought Becket to the ground; and with a third stroke a slice was taken off his skull, laying bare a portion of the brain. Into this mass of red and grey one of the knights plunged the point of his sword, and, drawing out some of the pulp, smeared it over the steps of the altar. It was found, when the body of Becket was stripped, that his shirt was filthy and full of vermin. This was the miserable way, in which men at that time thought it was right to express penitence for their sins.

Becket was buried at Canterbury. And there, three years and a half later, was performed one of the strangest acts of royal penance recorded in history. Henry, immediately on landing at Southampton after a visit to France, took horse for Canterbury, and, eating nothing but bread and drinking nothing but water on his way, reached at dawn one July morning the city, where a tomb had risen to St. Thomas. When the towers of the holy place broke upon his view, he sprang from his horse, and, taking off the shoes he wore, walked over the sharp flinty road to the Cathedral, where he arrived with bloody dust-stained feet. As the bell with slow and solemn beat was ringing, he went down to the crypt, and prostrated himself upon the grave of Becket, moaning and crying as he lay there in sight of many people. The Bishop of London meanwhile from the pulpit expressed the penitence of the royal mourner. When the last words of the sermon were uttered, the pale figure of the King arose, and went slowly to the chapter-house, where his back was bared, and eighty priests scourged him with knotted cords at the rate of four or five lashes apiece. Descending again to the grave-stone of the murdered man, he lay there on the chilly pavement without food for the rest of that day and the

whole of the following night, praying and weeping without a pause. The next dawn brought some relief to the penitent, who went round all the altars and relics in the church, repeating his prayers, and, then having heard mass and having drunk some holy water, said to have been blessed by the Archbishop himself, he took horse again and rode to London. We can scarcely wonder, that fever confined him to his bed for many days after this humiliating act of penance. But on the fifth day of his illness there came knocking at the door of his room a messenger from the north, who would not be denied admission. Starting up on his elbow as he lay, Henry learned from this intruder, that his general in the north, Ranulf de Glanville, had stolen in a fog near Alnwick upon William the Lion of Scotland, and had taken that monarch prisoner with sixty of his lords. With the superstitious credulity of his age the English King at once regarded this great success as the result of his penance and an unfailing sign that Heaven had forgiven the crime of Becket's murder. It was even said, that the capture had been made at the very hour, when Henry was smarting under the whips in the chapter-house of Canterbury.

## X.

## STRONGBOW'S INVASION OF IRELAND.

WHILE King Henry II. was living at his palace of Aquitaine in France, a huge Irishman, called Dermot Mac Morrogh, paid him a visit, which resulted in a Norman invasion, and what was called a Conquest of Ireland. A wicked woman, named Devorgilla, who was the wife of an Irish prince, had used the fascinations of her beauty to induce Dermot, then King of Leinster, to carry her off from an island in Meath, where her stern husband had shut her up. This abduction produced a war, in which Dermot was defeated and driven from his throne. He found his way to Henry, to whom already Ireland had been given by the only Englishman who ever held the position of Pope; and he offered, if the English King would help to restore him, that he would hold his kingdom under subjection to the English crown—that he would in fact become Henry's vassal. Not being then able to go across himself, Henry gave Dermot a letter, permitting him to enlist the English nobles in his cause. Dermot stayed a good while at Bristol, trying to persuade the neighbouring nobles to undertake his quarrel. At last Richard Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, agreed to assist him in return for the hand of his daughter Eva and the succession after his own death to the crown of Leinster. Strongbow was not, as his name might seem to suggest, a model of strength and military skill, for his frame was diseased and his voice was weak. But still he possessed the command of a number of lances, and a few trained Normans in their strong armour were a match for a whole army of the Irish people, who had forgotten their old civilization, and were armed only with knives and protected only with rugs of frieze. Two knights crossed the sea before Strongbow was ready, and with only a few hundred men seized the cities of Wexford and Dublin. We may understand both the kind of warfare that was waged and the nature of

the savage, in whose behalf it was undertaken, by the facts that three hundred Irish heads were brought to be laid in a horrid heap at the feet of Dermot, and that he, in tossing over the ghastly playthings, was so seized with mingled joy and rage at the sight of a head, which had once hated him, that he took it by the gory hair and bit off the nose and lips. It would scarcely surprise us to hear that he had the dreadful morsels cooked for his especial delight; but the chronicler does not add that fact.

A little later there came over a big Norman knight, called Raymond the Fat, who was the deputy or predecessor of Strongbow. Fat men are often good-natured; but Raymond must have been an exception to that pleasant rule, for, when he had taken seventy prisoners he carried them up to some high rocks, at the foot of which the sea was washing, and, having first broken their bones with clubs, he pitched them down the precipice into the water. Strongbow then came over himself, although Henry had sent him word not to do so. His first exploit was the siege of Waterford. Almost every town was then surrounded by a wall; and the great object of besiegers was of course to make a hole or, as it is called, a breach, in this defence. Strongbow managed to cut away the supports of a wooden house, which stood close to or was built into the wall of Waterford, and, when the structure fell, it tore away a large piece of the wall besides. Through the breach thus made the Normans rushed, and soon the streets were all strewn with dead bodies. He then marched towards Dublin, which he took in a somewhat similar way. Just when his force was thinned by a command from the English King that all loyal knights should return, a band of Danes in armour, whose red shields were the terror of all that coast, attacked the defences of the city. But the Norman knights easily beat off these rude sailors. There was then a great blockade of Dublin, which lasted for two months and so reduced the strength of the Norman garrison, that they were on the point of yielding to the besiegers. But they resolved on a final dash instead. And at nine one morning from the opened gate they rushed out in a glittering mass and charged the whole army. So sudden and so fierce was this *sortie*, as we have lately learned to



call the outward rush of a besieged force, that the Irish army, although numbering 30,000, fled in terror almost at sight of the soldiers in armour, galloping on with levelled spears and white plumes streaming back from their shining helmets.

This success secured the footing of the Normans in Ireland. After the fighting was over, Henry, who had forgiven the disobedience of Strongbow, sailed to Ireland, where he took up his quarters in a large house at Dublin, made of basket-work, and there he ate his Christmas dinner, to which he invited a number of the Irish chiefs.

## XI.

## THE ADVENTURES OF CŒUR DE LION.

It had always been the darling wish of Richard, surnamed the Lion-heart, to go and fight in Palestine against the Saracens. And, when he came to the English throne, he set about the preparations for a Crusade at once with all his might. He was a handsome man—this King Richard—tall, very strong, with clear blue eyes, and crisp curly brown hair: but he had behaved with most undutiful violence towards his father Henry; and, although he is said to have been much affected and to have wept bitterly at the sight of that father's dead body, lying white and still in the Abbey of Fontevraud, yet his repentance came too late to be of any use. The Jews, who lived by money-lending, as many of them still do, were treated by Richard's orders with horrible cruelty and were robbed of their treasures in every part of the kingdom. By this persecution and by selling everything saleable in the shape of situations and royal privileges, the Lion-heart collected a sum of money to meet the expenses of his expedition.

At Midsummer in the year 1190 the armies of Richard of England and Philip of France, who was to be his companion in the Holy War, assembled on the plain of Vezelai in France. The warriors wore coats of chain-mail, formed of steel rings, which reached nearly to the knee. On their heads was a low flat cap of steel, from the back and sides of which hung lappets of the same pliant armour. Iron mittens defended their hands, and the toes of their metal-plated shoes came to a sharp point, while from the heel stuck out the iron spikes that served as spurs. Hanging round the neck was a triangular shield, on which was painted in bright colours the device of the owner. And over the dark rings of the coat of mail was worn a surcoat of white or coloured cloth, sometimes edged or lined with ermine, and bearing in distinct embroidery on breast and

back the emblem of the Cross, whose battles they were going to fight. The English cross was white; the French wore one of red. There were fully a hundred thousand men in the double army, that filled all the plain with gay and glittering groups.

The two Kings went with their forces in company as far as Lyons. There their paths became different; for Philip, who had no fleet, was obliged to direct his march to Genoa, whose rich merchants were to provide him with sailing vessels, while Richard and his white-cross knights went along the banks of the Rhone to Marseilles, where they expected to find a large English fleet waiting to receive the troops. But the fleet had not arrived owing to Biscay storms and some delay at Lisbon. Richard, although displeased at the delay, consoled himself by setting out in a galley to seek adventures and pay visits along the Italian coast. He saw Philip again at Genoa—looked in at Pisa—did not look in at Rome, but bestowed a volley of hearty French abuse upon a Bishop of Ostia, who asked him for some money—spent a little time at Naples—and then, tired of the sea, mounted his horse and rode along the shore, over lovely plains, through forests tinged with early autumn, and sometimes breast-high through rivers, foaming down from the Apennines. One day, passing through a Calabrian village, he heard the cry of a very fine hawk, which a peasant of the place owned. As it was against the law all over Europe for a menial to have a bird so aristocratic, Richard, who wanted to kill some game as he passed along, went boldly into the man's house, and took the hawk upon his wrist. The peasant desired him to let go the bird; but he would not. All the poor man's violent gesturing and talk, which Richard did not understand, were of no use, and the King was marching off with his prize, when a great crowd of villagers, whom the noise had drawn round the door, began to flourish their cudgels and to pelt the thief with stones. One of them drew a knife, and ran at Richard, who contemptuously struck him with the flat of his sword. The blade snapped. Richard had then no resource but his heels, and to these he took manfully and ran, followed by a shouting rabble, to the shelter of a monastery

that stood near. A little later the noise of his trumpets, braying out their notes over the waters of the classic strait, announced his entry into the harbour of Messina.

The winter spent by Richard and Philip in this Sicilian city saw much fighting with the natives of the place, much gambling and wild revelry on the part of the Crusaders, and much quarrelling between the French and English Kings, who parted in the spring to go to Acre. One of Richard's galleys here received on board the beautiful Spanish girl, Berengaria of Navarre, whom he had resolved to marry, and whose affection for him induced her to face the toils and dangers of the Crusade in his company. The English fleet, which sailed out of Messina harbour in splendid array, was scattered soon after by a storm, which drove Richard to Rhodes, and separated him from the galley that bore his intended queen. Two of his vessels went to pieces on the rocks of Cyprus, and the people treated the shipwrecked crews with great cruelty. They little knew that they were preparing for themselves a Lion's fierce anger. Another cause of rage against the Cypriots arose, when he found the galley, which held Berengaria, lying off the shore, unable to land either from fear or owing to actual hindrance. The King of the island, Isaac, drew out his soldiers with impudent defiance, when Richard appeared; but his pride had a speedy fall, for his troops were beaten, his city with its wealth was taken, and he himself had to flee for his life in his shirt and breeches. On renewing the unequal and hopeless struggle a little later, he was taken prisoner, and, being loaded with fetters made of silver, because he was a King, was shut up in the dungeon of a Syrian castle. Then, snatching a brief rest from his almost ceaseless warfare, King Richard married his pretty Spaniard in the palace of the beaten monarch.

On the 8th of June 1191 a great thundering of drums and pealing of horns greeted the ships of the English King, as they sailed into the roads of Acre. For two years the siege of this city had been going on, and the plain around was rough with the graves and bones of the fallen. Saladin, perched like a watchful eagle on the top of Mount Carmel, had actually for some time been besieging the besiegers.

But the coming of the English King produced a wonderful change. By his own example he taught his soldiers how to work the battering-rams and springalds, and, when sickness seized him, he made some of them carry him on a mattress to the trenches, where he lay giving orders and directing operations. This sort of thing frightened the defenders of Acre, who lost heart and gave up the city only four days after Richard's arrival. During these four days an event had occurred, which was destined to have considerable influence upon Richard in future time. Among the attacking princes was a Duke of Austria, who took a tower, and to signalize his achievement planted his banner on the captured wall. This offended Richard, who had assumed the chief command, and he in a fit of anger tore down the flag and pitched it scornfully into the ditch below. The Duke could not then give way to his feeling of revenge: he nursed it for a fitting time, which came. Richard, armed with a battle-axe, upon whose head, weighing twenty pounds, the best smiths in England had spent their strength and skill, was always in the thickest of the fight, and earned so terrible a name that the dark-skinned women of the Saracens used to frighten their crying babies into silence by threatening that King Richard would come and take them. He fought at Azotus, and took Jaffa; but wind, rain, hunger, and the inevitable sickness, which exposure and privation bring, prevented him from advancing nearer than within twelve miles of Jerusalem. When he fell back on Ascalon, he began to repair the ruined fortifications of the place, and worked with pick-axe and trowel himself as an example to induce the Princes to forget their dignity for a time. Here again he had a collision with the Duke of Austria, and a most violent scene it was. When asked by Richard to take his turn at building the walls, this haughty Prince replied that he would do nothing of the kind, since his father had not been either a mason or a carpenter. Flaming up with sudden fury, Richard clutched him by the throat and kicked him from the place, hurling at him all the most abusive words that his foaming lips could speak for rage. And then he turned both the Duke and the Duke's vassals from the town.

More agreeable to read of are Richard's relations with his great foe Saladin, the Sultan of the Mahometans. On one occasion, when Richard was ill, there came a basket full of those plums, that grow at Damascus, and a large stock of pears and peaches. Supplies of snow also were regularly sent in during the hot weather by servants of Saladin, who gathered it from the mountains. And at the battle of Jaffa, when Richard's horse was disabled and he was forced to fight on foot, the brother of the Sultan was so delighted to behold his bravery, that he sent him a present of two magnificent Arabian horses, on one of which the English King continued all day to attack, unhorse, and kill the soldiers of the man, who gave the gift.

At last Richard and Saladin, growing tired of war, made a truce for three years, three months, three weeks, and three days—the number here repeated so often being considered to have a sacred and mysterious power. The last glimpse, which Richard caught of the Holy Land, consisted of the snowy tops of Lebanon cutting the eastern horizon, as he sailed away from Acre. Stretching out his arms, before the last white summit had faded from his view, he cried,—

“Most Holy Land, I commend thee to God's keeping. May He give me life and health to return and rescue thee from the Infidel.”

When he was near Marseilles, prompted by fear of the French King or some other of his many foes, he turned his ship about and sailed up the Adriatic, intending to make the journey overland by another route. There were only about twenty with him when he left Corfu. A storm drove him on the coast of Istria. Travelling over the mountains there, he reached a town, to the governor of which he sent a page with a ruby ring, asking for a passport in the name of two pilgrims homeward bound from Jerusalem. The value of the present did not agree with the homely name—Hugh the Merchant—under which Richard tried to disguise his royalty. He was suspected, and had to escape on a swift horse. His train of attendants dwindled in numbers, until he was left with one knight and a page; and his wretchedness was increased by broken health and but little food. Having arrived at Erperg near Vienna, he went into

a cottage to sleep, sending the page to buy food in the market of Vienna. The boy was richly dressed, and wore in his belt a pair of embroidered gloves. This attracted notice, for men then seldom wore gloves, and none but the highest wore gloves like those. He was arrested, and whipped, but would tell nothing, until they were going to cut out his tongue. He then described the hiding-place of Richard; and a number of soldiers, surrounding the house, took the Lion-heart, as he lay in the deep sleep of exhaustion. Even then his courage did not fail him, for he drew his sword and would not yield to any one but the Prince of the place. And, when the Prince came, who was it but *Leopold of Austria*, the very man, whose banner he had torn from the battlements of Acre, and whom he had kicked in the trenches of Ascalon!

Richard, thus captured by his enemy, was sold to the Emperor for a large sum; and, after being allowed to make a speech in his own defence at the Diet of Worms, was securely locked up in a Tyrolese castle. He had some resources, which enabled him to pass the time pleasantly enough. Among these were his skill in poetry, and his love of music. With such accomplishments is connected that pretty story of his discovery, which unfortunately is not true. It is said by a chronicler, that a minstrel named Blondel, who had been a great favourite of King Richard, in grief at the long and seemingly hopeless separation from his royal master, went wandering about the mountain lands of Austria, trying to discover the castle, in which the Lion-heart lay chained. One lovely evening, as the sun was sinking in the west, he sat down on a grassy bank beside the grated windows of a keep or tall square tower among the hills: and there he struck the strings of his harp, and sang the words of a little song, which King Richard had himself composed. While he was bending over the wailing strings, and wondering, if he should ever see his King again, there came from the castle wall, what seemed to be the echo of his strain. He stopped to listen—the music, dim and sweet, still fell upon his wondering ear. With beating heart and hushed breath he stole towards the casement, and heard the voice of his beloved master, singing the very

words and music of the well-known air. At last his patience and devotion had met their reward, and he did not rest until his King was free.

This story is not true, as I have said. The Emperor wrote a letter to Philip of France, describing the place of Richard's captivity; and it was this letter, the contents of which became known to Longchamp, the Chancellor of England, that disclosed the secret. When it became known where Richard was, his courtiers set to work at raising a sum of money, by means of which he was ransomed.

The rest of his life was taken up in petty French wars, and in one of them he received his death wound. News having reached him that one of his vassals—the Viscount of Limoges—had found a treasure, he, as superior lord, demanded it all. The vassal would give only a half, and so they began to fight about it. Besieging the Viscount in the castle of Chaluz, Richard was hit in the shoulder by an arrow, shot from the bow-string of young Bertrand de Gurdun. When soon afterwards the castle was taken, Bertrand was brought before the King, whose slight hurt unskilful surgery had aggravated into a mortal wound.

“What have I done to thee,” said Richard, “that thou shouldest seek my life?”

“My father,” said the brave young archer, “and my two brothers thou hast killed with thine own hand, and me thou wouldst hang. I am content, if thou diest, and the world be freed from an oppressor.”

These bold words pleased the dying King, who desired him to be dismissed free, with the present of a hundred shillings. But a cruel captain in Richard's service had the poor youth flayed alive and then hanged. Richard died from the rankling of the arrow-head in his shoulder, and the merciless carving of the surgeon who tried to extract the barb.



## XII.

## ROBIN HOOD AND WILLIAM LONGBEARD.

**THERE** were two men, connected with the reign of Richard the First, whose names were very dear to the lower orders of the English people. The first especially was the hero of many ballads, which have been handed down to our day. I now proceed to tell the stories of Robin Hood and William Longbeard, cautioning my readers however, that the picturesque details of the first narrative are not to be taken as strictly historical.

A man of noble family, who in later life claimed to be Earl of Huntingdon, was born about 1160 at Locksley in Nottinghamshire. His real name was Robert Fitzooth, but the familiar talk of the country-side converted this into Robin Hood. Burdened with debts, into which his free style of living had led him, and embroiled in a fray, in which he shot a man, he took to a life in the woods, and supported himself and the band of lawless spirits, that gathered round him to the number of one hundred, by killing deer and robbing all the rich travellers that passed through the forest. It was then punishable by death to kill the King's deer. But, dressed in Lincoln green, with their six-foot bows of yew and arrows of an ell in length, these bold outlaws lived a merry life in the great forests of Sherwood in Nottinghamshire and Barnsdale in Yorkshire, defying the Sheriff, robbing fat Bishops and Abbots, and aiding poor widows and other persons, on whom the oppressor's hand was laid heavily. We must not regard Robin as a common robber, although his example is not one that can be held up for imitation in these days. He must be looked upon rather as one of those proud nobles, whom the grinding oppression of the Norman rulers had driven to a lawless life. His chief adherents were Little John, Will Scadlock or Scarlet, George-a-Green, Much, the Miller's son, and Friar Tuck. In seeking recruits his plan was this. When he heard of a

very stout fighter or good shot, he went in disguise to the place, where this desirable gentleman was to be met, and there managed to pick a quarrel with him. If the prowess of his foe satisfied him, he tried to add him to the number of his band. And thus he got many a beating with fist and quarter-staff, before he secured certain of his best men. His own skill in archery was surprising. He could send an arrow to the distance of a mile, a fact which he proved one day, after dining with an Abbot of Whitby, by going to the top of the Abbey and discharging a shaft. It fell at the distance of a full measured mile. And then his aim was so perfect that he never failed to split a willow wand, set up at the distance of a couple of hundred yards. In winter Robin and his men probably scattered themselves among the neighbouring cottages; although it may have been, that they built comfortable huts for themselves, in which they defied rain, wind, and frost.

Among those, who profited by the chivalrous help of Robin, was Sir Richard of the Lee, a Knight whose castle stood just within the borders of the wood. One day the Knight, riding slow and sad through the forest glades, is brought to Robin by three of the men, and is treated to a luxurious dinner, in which swans, pheasants, numble-pie (that is, pie made of deer's entrails) figure largely, while bread, wine, and ale are in plentiful store. After dinner the Knight tells a sorrowful story of how his son had killed a man, and how his estate had therefore come to be mortgaged to a rich Abbot for £400. Instead of robbing the poor Knight, Robin gives him this sum, providing him also with clothes, arms, and a horse. The Abbot is paid and the land saved. And by and by Sir Richard makes a splendid present to his benefactor of a hundred bows and a hundred sheaves of arrows, an ell long, feathered with peacock's plumes, and notched with solid silver.

Once Robin incurred a great risk of capture at Nottingham, whither he went to compete at a grand shooting match got up by the Sheriff. He wore a dress of red, lest the Lincoln green might betray him. But his shooting soon placed him so high above all the marksmen there, that with one accord the cry of "Robin Hood" broke from all the

surrounding crowd; and instead of receiving the prize, which was a silver arrow with point and feathers of gold, the outlaw was near getting a score of arrows in his breast from the Sheriff's men. However, he managed to escape to the place where his men lay in ambush, and some skirmishing took place, in which Little John received a wound in the knee. Much took the hurt man on his back and retreated with him, often stopping to launch a shaft at the enemy, until the friendly castle of Sir Richard received the band. This stronghold was then besieged. The Sheriff seized Sir Richard one day as he was out hawking; but Robin rushed to the rescue and shot the Sheriff, whose head he hacked off.

The reigning King, whether it was Edward or Richard, seems to have paid Robin a visit in disguise, and to have been delighted with the good cheer and good company to be found under the shadow of the linden-trees. In the shooting match, got up for the royal diversion, every one that missed was punished by a box on the ear, administered with all the hitter's might. In this sport the King and Robin interchanged buffets, which did discredit to the training of neither court nor greenwood, for each fell sprawling before the sledge-like action of the other's fist.

How Robin dealt with a certain Bishop of Hereford may be given as a specimen of his usual treatment of such personages. Being told by his scouts that the Bishop was coming, Robin and a few of his men put on shepherds' dresses and went shooting at the deer in a place past which he rode. He approached on his richly caparisoned palfrey, which paced steadily along under his well-fed person, and, when he saw some common fellows, as he thought, killing the deer, he stopped and shouted out "Ha, knaves, what are ye doing there?" and then he sent some of his attendants to arrest them for such daring poaching. They pretended to be in a great fright, and went a little way with their captors, when suddenly Robin blew three blasts on his bugle, and out of every glade came running men in green with white bows ready bent in their hands. Then the Bishop knew that he had fallen into a cunning trap and begged earnestly for pardon. Robin made his men prepare a fine

dinner, and, when it was over, called on the Bishop to pay the reckoning. Seeing his unwillingness, one of the foresters then spread a cloak on the grass, and emptied on it the contents of the prelate's money-bags—£300 in all, which were divided among the band. Before the Bishop, off whom all his fine clothes were stripped, was permitted to go, he was made to dance in his boots for the amusement of his roaring hosts, or was tied to a tree and made to sing.

Piteously, but with great poetic beauty the ballads of old England depict the death of Robin. Feeling at the age of eighty-seven, that the toil and exposure of his woodland life were at last beginning to tell upon his strength, he went to the Convent of Kirkby, of which his own cousin was Prioress, and begged of her to bleed him, as he did not feel at all well. Ladies then did nearly all the doctoring of the time. Taking him into a quiet room, she opened the veins of his arm with a sharp knife, and then, going out, she locked the door and left him to bleed to death. When he found that she had treated him in this way, and that he could not stop the blood, he tried to climb to the window but fell back half-fainting on the floor. He then raised his horn to his pallid lips and blew three faint and weary blasts. No ear but that of Little John heard the feeble notes: but he, suspecting something wrong, ran to the Convent, and broke open all the doors, until he found his chief lying at the gasp of death. Robin had just strength enough to beg that his faithful friend would raise him to the level of the window and give him his trusty bow, that he might shoot one arrow more before he died, adding as a last request that he might be buried where the arrow fell. It was a short and nerveless flight that Robin's last arrow took. Exhausted by the effort, he sank back and died with his bow in his clenched hand.

" Lay me a green sod under my head,  
And another at my feet;  
And lay my best bow by my side  
Which was my music sweet;  
And make my grave of gravel and green,  
Which is most right and meet,

Let me have length and breadth enough,  
With a green sod under my head,  
That they may say when I am dead,  
Here lies bold Robin Hood."

A man of very different and less noble nature was William Longbeard or Fitzosbert, who won so upon the affections of the London mob, that they used to call him "the King of the Poor." He was one of those wild and reckless men, who had followed Richard of the Lion Heart to the Holy Land, and had there acquired a turbulence of manner and lavishness of expenditure, which nothing could lessen. When he came back to London, he continued to squander the money of a brother, who had brought him up, until that brother naturally grew tired of having his money spent by a vicious idle fellow, who would not earn a mark for himself. Fitzosbert then took up the trade of a demagogue, and let his beard grow long, that he might be looked upon as a true son of the Saxon race. Very basely he brought a charge of treason against the brother, to whose kindness he owed so much : but the Court at Westminster, taking the case to trial, rejected the accusation as unfounded. Longbeard, going to St. Paul's Cross nearly every day, made violent and inflammatory speeches to the assembled rabble, whom he kindled into rage by reminding them of the taxes they had to pay, and the cruel oppression, with which they were ground down by the rich. So well did he succeed, and so keen was the feeling of the people against their foreign taskmasters that a secret association, of which he was the leading spirit, grew until it numbered about 50,000 members. He was summoned before a great council of lords to answer for his seditious speeches, and he went ; but so great a multitude of poor artisans followed him that the nobles were afraid to touch him. They were tempted at last to have recourse to assassination. Some citizens, among whom a man called Geoffrey was conspicuous, dogged his steps for several days, until they saw him walking with only nine followers. They at once rushed upon him, but he received Geoffrey on the point of a knife, which cleft the citizen's heart ; and, springing away, he ran at the top of his speed to the Church of St. Mary-le-Bow, and climbed into the steeple, after having shut and barricaded the door in the face of his pursuers. For four days they tried to force their way in ; but then, seeing all other means useless, they set the door on fire. As the sparks and smoke went whirling

and rolling up the narrow winding stair, Longbeard resolved to make a rush for life and liberty. But a man, who had a father's death to revenge, was waiting at the foot of the stair; and, as he came down, the son of Geoffrey clutched him and plunged a long knife into his body. The blow did not kill Longbeard, who was dragged at the tail of a horse to the Tower for his trial, and then to the elm-trees of Smithfield, where he was hanged on the public gallows. The people, whose champion this dissolute and unprincipled Crusader had been induced by selfish motives to become, stole the gibbet and broke it up into little splinters as keepsakes. Even the very earth, on which he stood before he died, was considered sacred: and to his tomb they flocked as to the shrine of some holy saint.

## XIII.

## THE SIGNING OF MAGNA CHARTA.

PERHAPS the meanest man, who ever sat upon the English throne, was John, the brother of the Lion Heart. From beginning to end his reign of seventeen years presents scene after scene of crime and folly.

He began by murdering his nephew Arthur, a boy of fifteen, who had a better right to the English crown than he had. This boy, urged by the French King, commenced a war, but was captured in his bed by John, who sent him from one prison to another, until he reached Rouen. At Falaise some ruffians were sent by John to put out his eyes, but their pity and the protection of Hubert, the warden of the castle, saved little Arthur from this suffering. But there was no safety for the boy. One night at Rouen he was roused from his sleep and hurried down a dark stair to the gate, which opened on the river Seine. The cold, the darkness, and the rush of the ink-black stream, as it swept gurgling by, froze him into silence. A boat with two black figures waited at the stair; and, when he was pushed in, with a stroke or two of the oars it floated out into the centre of the current. Arthur knew that this meant death, and on his knees screamed for mercy. But John had none. Twining his hands in the fair hair of his brother's child, he stabbed the boy several times, and, when he thought the crime complete, lifted the body, warm and pliant still, and threw it into the river. We can picture the dark outline of this royal dastard's figure, as he leant over the edge of the boat, washing from his cruel hands the red stains of his crime, and trying to catch a glimpse of his victim's body as it floated dimly towards the sea.

John's quarrel with the Pope afforded a specimen of his cowardly crawling nature. It was all about the appointment of an Archbishop of Canterbury. John wanted one man—the Pope another; and neither would give in. When the

favourite of the Pope, gladly welcomed by the monks of the place, came to Canterbury, John sent soldiers to drive the whole company from the cloisters, threatening at the same time to put out the eyes and cut off the noses of any Roman priests he might seize in England. The Pope then uttered the terrible sentence of an Interdict, which deprived the land of all religious services and turned the churches into places hung with black and strewed with ashes. Quite pitiless with regard to the people he ruled, John set about extorting money from them to carry on his wars—wars in which he lost a great deal of the territory left by his father. His cunning cruelty may be judged from the plan he took to make a Jew of Bristol pay ransom. Having thrown him into a dungeon, he sent a man with a pair of pincers every morning to pull out one of the poor wretch's teeth. The Jew bore this for eight days, but, when the ninth tooth was about to be wrenched from his aching and swollen jaw, he agreed to pay the money demanded by the King. When John saw that the Pope was going to give away his kingdom to Philip of France, he made the vilest and most abject submission to the priest, who represented the Roman Pontiff, taking an oath that he would hold England and Ireland under vassalage and that he would pay a yearly tribute. So wretchedly servile was he, that when the Legate, to whom John offered some gold and silver money, flung it scornfully on the pavement, he endured the insult and swore allegiance to the Pope.

The Barons of England, enraged by John's want of spirit and encouraged by his cowardice, met together several times in order to consult how they might wring from him a Great Charter, which should place their liberties as Englishmen beyond the power of any King. The Archbishop of Canterbury having drawn up a deed, it was carried by some of these stern steel-clad warriors into the presence of John, who grew as pale as death when he saw them. He promised to give them an answer at Easter; but, when Easter came, he cursed and swore that they might as well ask for his crown. The Barons then did what they had resolved to do, if he refused their demands. They drew their swords and seized London, which brought John to his



senses. A time was then arranged for signing the Great Charter.

One day in June 1215 there was a great meeting of Barons and courtiers in a green spot by the Thames, which bears the name of Runnymede. The Barons, glittering in steel and gold, came riding on their pawing chargers from the town of Staines. John, with a false smile on his face, and a train of attendants behind him, came out of Windsor to the place of meeting. Many of the soldiers came to the field that morning prepared for shedding blood if necessary; but the King was as smooth and soft as the satin of his royal surcoat. Taking the pen with scarcely a question, he wrote his name at the foot of the deed, which secured to Englishmen the full enjoyment of their freedom. And then with gracious smiles and words to the great mass of armed men, he galloped away to the castle, from which he had come. Scarcely able to believe that they had got the royal signature with so little trouble, they talked awhile and then dispersed. But before the last man had left the meadow, henceforward to be so famous a name in our history, John was rolling on the floor at Windsor, chewing sticks and straw like a madman and cursing his weak folly for putting his name to such a document. He then almost immediately began to treat his people even worse than before.

He died as he had lived. Coming one night, after his baggage and jewels had been swallowed up by the tide in the Wash, to the Abbey of Swineshead, he devoured a quantity of peaches or pears and then drank so much new cider, that he took a fever. Of this he died a little later.

## PART SECOND.

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### I.

#### HOW AN EARL OF LEICESTER FOUNDED THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

IN the latter days of King Henry III., whose reign was longer than that of any other sovereign except George III., there was a man of piety and learning, who wore the coronet attached to the earldom of Leicester. He once ruled Guienne, a province in the south of France, but was recalled from that position by Henry, who called him "traitor" to his face. Now Henry was a funny-looking little man with one eye half-closed as with a perpetual wink; and Montfort, the Earl, was a tall strong noble man, whose very presence was commanding; so that in this exchange of fierce talk the King shone in a somewhat ridiculous light. At that time the English people were very much discontented at the crowds of foreigners, who had come over from Provence, the native place of the Queen, and were enjoying all the richest offices at Court and the fattest livings in the Church.

Remembering how the gleam of armour had frightened John, the Barons came to parliament clad in complete steel; and at Oxford several articles were drawn up, called the *Provisions of Oxford*. The nation then divided into two parties; one gathered round the King—the other round Leicester; and a war began.

Marching from London with an army, every man in which wore a white cross upon his breast in token of his belief that he was fighting in a holy cause, the Earl of Leicester found King Henry and his son, Prince Edward, with their men grouped in a valley not far from Lewes in Sussex. The

battle began. Young Edward, the gilding of whose spurs was fresh and new, dashed at the head of a mass of horse-men upon the London citizens, who had followed Leicester to the war. The impetuous charge completely scattered them, and the victors, rejoicing in what they considered noble sport, hunted the flying fragments of the force to a great distance from the field. When the heat of the chase had cooled a little, Prince Edward rode back; but found that he had been too rash in deserting his father, who in the meantime had been attacked, defeated, and made prisoner by Leicester. The Prince too was seized by a flying squadron of horse, as he was trying in perplexity to escape from the field, where his hot blood had cost the cause of the crown so dear. Father and son then lay for a year in prison.

Between this battle, and another, which resulted in the death of Leicester, that celebrated step was taken, which added to the Council of lords and prelates, already existing, that other kind of members who represented the Middle Classes, and laid the foundation of what is the most powerful body in our great kingdom—the House of Commons. Leicester used the name of the captive King in issuing his writs, and, besides calling two knights from every county to represent what we call “the country gentlemen,” called also “two citizens from every city and two burgesses from every borough” in order that the professional men, merchants, shop-keepers, and trades-people generally should also have spokesmen in the great Council of the nation. At first these mercantile and professional members, overawed by the novelty of their position, gave their votes silently, not daring to speak in presence of men accustomed to dictate to Kings and govern the destinies of a great land. But they soon learned to speak boldly out.

Prince Edward escaped from prison in the spring and gathered an army for the war. Leicester, whose son was in Sussex, lay at Hereford west of the Severn, and in spite of Edward's efforts to keep him there by breaking bridges and burning boats, managed to cross to Worcester, where he waited for his son. But Edward came suddenly by night on this young warrior near Kenilworth, and after scattering

his force obliged him to seek shelter in the great castle there. The Earl moved to a place on the Avon called Evesham, and with great gladness saw his own banners coming over the hills from Kenilworth. These, however, turned out to be the captured standards of his son. And, when he looked to other points of the compass, he saw glittering files of spears advancing in converging lines towards the position he held. Bitterly, as he saw this sight, did he cry,—

“It was I who taught them the art of war.”

But bitter words were of little use at such a crisis. Having put his men in array of battle, he knelt down to say a short prayer and then took the sacrament, as pious knights always did before going into battle. The fortunes of the day went against him from the first; but he resolved to sell his life dearly. His last stand was made on the top of a hill, where he gathered in a solid circle round him some of his bravest men. When his horse was killed, he fought on foot; but the circle at length yielded to the pressure of charges from every side, and brave old Leicester, a benefactor of the English people second to none, fell on his last field. His head and limbs were brutally chopped off, and the horrible fragments were sent as a present to the wife of his greatest foe.

## II.

## THE EXPERIMENTS OF ROGER BACON.

**DURING** the Middle Ages over all Europe men gave themselves up to a vain search after two things, which they supposed would make them happy for ever. These were a mysterious gem, called the Philosopher's Stone, which was to have the power of turning everything it touched into gold—and a pure transparent liquid, known as the Elixir of Life, which would give to those who drank it unfading beauty and immortal life. Of course no such substances really exist; but the search for them was caused and encouraged by that keen hungering after immortality, and that deep sense of this world's insecurity and shadowiness, which lie hidden in the human soul. The only talisman, amulet, or elixir, conferring wealth that never perishes and life that never ends, must be sought in the saving faith of a true Christian.

Let us penetrate an alchemist's den and watch him at his wasting toil. It is a cold bare room of naked stone, with a furnace glowing deep red in one corner, and things very strange to our modern eyes scattered at random over the earthen floor. Circles and triangles of red and white mix in magical confusion on the scribbled wall with scraps of uncouth lettering from books of witchcraft. A brown skull stands grinning on a shelf with skins of lizards and bundles of withered herbs. Nor must we forget to notice the long white tapering wand, with which the incantation-scenes are wrought; nor omit to scan the wrinkled eager face of the tall thin man, under whose black gown there seems to be little else than skin and bone. Bending over the crucible to pour in a few drops of some blood-red liquid and watch their effect upon the molten mass within, on whose surface lambent flames of blue and green are flickering with a ghastly light, he appears more like a spectre, playing at some shadowy reminiscence of earthly life, than a man with a heart to feel and a brain to think. This is the Alchemist.

Let us now look at his companion in superstition—the star-gazing Astrologer. To behold him at his nightly toil we must climb with many steps and frequent pausing a stair of winding stone, which leads to the very pinnacle of a turret, whose top lies open to the sky. Here we find him with his instruments of brass, his globes, his compasses, looking out upon the night, and with eye that never tires watching the slow passage of a certain star across the path of another orb, and marking with eager hand upon his chart the places of the two at the mysterious hour of midnight, when one day melts in a moment of time into its successor. Thus shall he be ready to tell the probable fortune of some superstitious inquirer into future things, who has committed to him the task of casting a horoscope, which shall depict the position of the Twelve Houses or Signs of the Zodiac.

I have glanced at these two types of men, as they might have been seen at this distant time, because their search, though they did not find the thing they sought, was not entirely in vain. In fact they found out for us in these midnight porings many things about minerals, gases, liquids, and the stars, which prepared the way for our great chemists and astronomers of modern times. And there were men among them, who thought of inventions that did not ripen for centuries after their time. Such a one was Roger Bacon, a Franciscan Friar, whose story I am now about to tell in a few words.

This man, who has been called the father of our experimental philosophy, was a native of Somersetshire, and a student of Oxford and Paris. In the former place, having put on the grey frock of the Franciscan monks, he gave himself up to a life of experiments and research. He sought the talismans, which infatuated the alchemist, and he dealt too in the marvels of astrology. But he saw much truth, while wasting his hours in the vain pursuit of forbidden knowledge. The two things, for which his name in science is especially famous, were his knowledge of an explosive substance like gunpowder, and his idea of an instrument, which would do what our modern telescope does for us. He tells us that he could so prepare the thing called saltpetre, as to make a small portion of it—as much as would fill a little

parchment bag the size of one's thumb—explode with a noise like thunder and a flash like lightning. And he tells us too, that he believed it possible to shape and arrange transparent substances like glass and crystal, so that the smallest letters might, by looking through them, be read at a wonderful distance, and that the grains of sand even might be counted in the same way; adding that he could make a boy look like a giant and a man like a mountain. He had got the idea of the microscope—an earlier invention—from books or teachers in his youth; but he here expands his knowledge of the simple magnifying glass, into a hint of that wonderful instrument, by which our sight can penetrate millions of miles beyond the sun, and can actually discern the mountains and valleys in the moon.

Friar Bacon, as a matter of course, because he knew more than most men of his day, was supposed to have sold his soul to Satan; and of this wretched piece of superstition his enemies took advantage and got him cast into prison at the age of sixty-four. But they only gave him thus a better opportunity for thought and study; and within walls, which would have been very terrible to a man, used to the bustle and glitter of a court life, this great father of science continued for ten years quietly to make his experiments and write his books. When he was released from his cell in prison, he went back calmly to his rooms at Oxford, and there he died.

## III.

## LONGSHANKS.

THIS somewhat comical name, as it now seems, was conferred on King Edward I., a monarch who certainly deserves the title of the greatest Plantagenet. We have already seen him with his father on the fields of Lewes and Evesham. We have now to trace his riper deeds of war.

Imitating the prowess of his warlike ancestor of the Lion Heart, he assumed the Cross, and went upon the last Crusade. He did little to prove either his bravery or his skill as a general; and we are glad to meet a romantic story as a relief from the tedious tale of his inaction.

As he was lying one Friday afternoon upon his couch, loosely dressed and overcome with the excessive heat of a climate very different from that of England, a turbaned man of dark complexion appeared at the door of the room, bowing with all the solemn ceremony common in the East and seeking admission to his presence. This man came as the messenger of the Emir of Jaffa, and, advancing to the bedside, he offered a letter to the Prince. But, while Edward was lazily stretching out his hand for the writing, the cunning Asiatic, who had a dagger hidden below his loose *ber-noos*, as the flowing dress is called, drew it and darted forward, aiming at the Prince's heart. Edward caught the blade by flinging up his arm, and then, springing up from the bed on which he lay, regardless of the blood that was dripping fast from his wounded limb, he wound his huge arms round the assassin, threw him to the ground, and killed him with his own weapon. When the English Prince had time to look at his wound, he saw the edges growing purple and the colour spreading into the surrounding flesh. This was a sign of poison on the dagger-blade. There was no time to be lost. A surgeon was called at once, the edges of the wound were cut away, and antidotes were applied to the place. A Spaniard, writing the story of this poisoned



stab, tells us that Edward's wife Eleanor sucked the poison from the wound at the risk of her own life—a pretty story of wifely devotion, but a story resting on the statement of this writer alone, who, since Eleanor was his countrywoman, was naturally desirous to paint her in colours as bright as possible.

When Edward came home from the Crusade to be King of England, he formed the ambitious resolve of conquering the whole island of Britain.

He began with Wales—a land of mountains, which still gives shelter to a peculiar people descended from the Celtic inhabitants of the forests. The King of Wales, then called Llewelyn, was a Prince of great bravery; and the huge cone of Snowdon was the great central stronghold of the mountaineers. Edward first tried the plan of surrounding and starving the Welsh bands, but, as soon as he relaxed the lines inclosing them, they broke out again. He then saw that he must storm their stronghold, and that it could not be done with knights in armour or pikemen in mail. He got a number of men from the Pyrenees, called Basques,—light active wiry fellows used to scrambling up precipices and possessed of steady heads and sure feet; and with these he assailed the forests and rocks of Snowdon so successfully, that he drove Llewelyn from their shelter towards the Wye. There he was caught by some English soldiers, who came on him so suddenly that he had not time to put on his armour; and a lance-wound in his side closed his career of patriotic daring. His head was sent to London, where it was placed on the spikes of the Tower with a crown made of mingled silver and ivy resting in mockery on its battered and blackening temples. This death may be said to have completed the Conquest of Wales.

Edward's schemes against the freedom of Scotland required more time and toil, and yet did not succeed after all. It so happened that there was a dispute about a successor to the Scottish crown; and Edward, bringing up an old claim, interfered, as if he was the Lord Paramount of that northern kingdom. He put on the throne a poor weakling called Baliol, whom the people nicknamed *Toom Tabard*, and then he called this man so often into England to account for the

government of the kingdom, that even the poor spirit of Baliol revolted, and he began a war. This was just what the English King wanted. He went northward, plucked the crown from Baliol's head, and marched with a victorious army to the Moray Frith.

Then rose up one of the two great heroes of Scottish history—Sir William Wallace of Ellerslie. Gathering an army, he assaulted and took a great number of towns, and by the Forth at Stirling he completely overthrew an English army under the command of Surrey, whom Edward had left behind as Governor of Scotland. There was a narrow wooden bridge across the Forth at the place, where the two armies came in sight of each other on opposite banks of that broad stream, and Surrey committed the unpardonable mistake of allowing his men to straggle across this slight structure in the face of a force, inferior certainly in numbers but waiting in firm array for a chance of attacking his battalions. Wallace waited quietly, until the thin threads of men, that had crossed and were mingled all in confusion, amounted to about half the hostile force, and then he charged down from the hills with the joyous certainty of victory. We are told, that, when the body of Cressingham the Treasurer was found, the skin was peeled off it for the purpose of being tanned and worn by the victor. This was barbarous and disgraceful treatment of a fallen foe.

When Edward, who was across the sea, heard of the defeat, which his troops had suffered at Stirling, he resolved to crush Wallace with a mighty blow. He therefore collected a great army and invaded Scotland. There was scarcely a blade of grass to be seen, for Wallace had laid waste all the southern counties in the hope of starving his enemy out of the land. Edward nevertheless advanced to a place near Edinburgh, and there got word from two Scottish traitors that the force of Wallace lay in Falkirk wood. He moved at once towards the spot, and after a night spent on Linlithgow Moor, during which a kick from his horse broke two of his ribs, at sunrise came in view of the Scottish army, which had assumed the form of four solid circles. The battle went on, until the English archers broke so many gaps in these round masses, that they could not resist the violent

charge of the heavy English cavalry. Wallace was beaten; and not many years afterwards, a fitting companion to those cowardly lords, who betrayed him at Falkirk, betrayed him, as he slept, into the hands of his enemies. Dragged on a hurdle to Smithfield, he was hanged, disembowelled, and cut in quarters, with all the revolting minuteness of a barbarous time.

Then Robert Bruce stretched out his hand towards the Scottish crown. He began his movements by a murder, which was very near costing him the success of his whole plan. Having arranged a meeting in a church at Dumfries with Comyn, a man who was his rival in seeking the Scottish crown, Bruce went there, with a dagger hanging by his side as usual. After kissing one another, they began to talk over the affairs of the kingdom, walking, as they talked, towards the high altar. But the kiss was forgotten, as they continued to wrangle together; and, when Bruce charged Comyn with having betrayed him to King Edward, the accused man shouted passionately, "It is a lie." Bruce kindling up with sudden rage, drew his dagger and plunged it into the breast of Comyn, who fell bleeding and groaning on the steps of the altar. Paralyzed for an instant by what he had done in a burst of maddening anger, Bruce stood stupefied, but then ran hastily out to his horse, crying, "I doubt I have killed Comyn." One of his attendant knights, Sir Roger Kirkpatrick, heard the cry, and, shouting "You doubt? I mak siccar (or make sure)", ran in and stabbed the wounded man, until death was certain.

In spite of this crime, Robert Bruce was allowed to assume the crown of Scotland. When Edward, whose long legs were now thin and weak with age, heard the news, he broke into fury, and called for his horse and an army. Ill or well, he was resolved to invade Scotland and tear the crown from the head of Bruce. But God had willed otherwise. He merely reached the English shore of the Solway Frith, from which the blue hills of Scotland could be seen across a narrow sea, and there he died, after having made his son swear a solemn oath to boil his corpse, till the flesh came off the bones, and cause these to be carried at the head of the English army into Scotland.

## IV.

**BEATEN AT BANNOCKBURN AND KILLED AT BERKELEY.**

THE words, which head this chapter, express in a short form the miserable failure and the miserable end of our first Prince of Wales—the handsome youth, upon whose deeds of bravery and conquest his stern old father had founded so many hopes. Abandoning himself to a life of idleness and vice, he sank into an effeminate lazy fop, whose time was principally spent in trying on new dresses of the richest and brightest silk, edged with the rarest furs, and embroidered with the most precious jewelled work. His unworthy favourites did as they pleased in governing the kingdom and ill-treating the Barons.

At last, however, Edward II. was roused for a short time from his lethargy of sensual indulgence; and what stirred him to action was the fact that King Robert Bruce of Scotland had left to the English conquerors only one castle of all those that the First Edward had seized. That castle was on Stirling Rock, and it too was threatened with speedy capture. Gathering an army of more than one hundred thousand men, the English King went northward to the place of danger, and there found Bruce with his comparatively little force of forty thousand, marshalled on the banks of a *burn*, or little stream, called the Bannock, which finds its way into the Forth below Stirling.

The English King on the day before the battle sent a body of horse to steal into Stirling Castle behind some hillocks that lay near. The watchful eye of Bruce detected the movement, and, riding up to his brave nephew Randolph, he cried,—

“Randolph, a rose has fallen from your chaplet. You have allowed the enemy to pass.”

The words had scarcely left his lips, when Randolph with a few horsemen dashed off at racing speed to get between the English and the Rock. The English, turning to charge

him, were received on the projecting spear-points of a solid circle, and were beaten off. Douglas, seeing the lances of Randolph's little band almost hidden in the thick wood of English spears, begged leave from Bruce to go and aid his friend. He obtained the King's consent with some trouble, for Bruce knew well of what metal Randolph was made. But, as Douglas was riding fast to the rescue, he saw the English falling back, and with true knightly generosity he drew rein and left all the glory of the glorious repulse to the men at whose risk it had been achieved.

Before this skirmish had come quite to an end, Bruce had fought and won his celebrated duel with the English knight De Boune. The Scottish King, dressed in complete armour, and with a battle-axe in his hand, was riding on a little pony up and down in front of his lines, easily noticeable among his lords by the golden crown which adorned his helmet of steel. De Boune, mounted on a strong bony charger, fit to carry a full-armed knight in battle, saw him trotting carelessly about, and, forgetting all the rules of fair fighting, came thundering across the field with levelled lance, aimed straight at the breast of the Scottish King. Robert stood, as if carved in stone, till the point was within a yard or two of his heart, and then, with a sudden wrench of his strong wrist, he swung his pony aside, and rising to his full height in the stirrups, came down upon the helmet of the passing knight with a blow of his axe so terrific, that it broke the helmet into chips of steel, sliced the head in two as if it had been a melon, and left nothing in his own hand but the brass-bound handle of the broken axe.

But Bruce was a general as well as a soldier. He had noticed how strong the foe was in cavalry, and he knew that his own hopes of success lay in rendering that part of the English army useless. Accordingly at the dead of night, while the English were drinking by their watch-fires, as the Saxons had done at Hastings, he sent out men with spades and pick-axes, who dug deep holes all over the field in front of his left wing, and in these holes he planted sharp stakes, covering each hole with a mask of sods, which made it look like firm ground. He also scattered over the ground num-

bers of those balls with many spikes, which were called *cal-trops*, and which were intended to lame the horses.

Early next morning a body of English knights made a fierce charge upon the Scottish lines; another and another followed, without any result except the shaking and confusion of their own array. The position of the Scottish army, admirably chosen, prevented the English from advancing to the attack in any form but that of a narrow column; and so there were thousands of soldiers in King Edward's army, who did nothing on this memorable day except to block the way and prevent the advance and retreat of the lines really in action. All the little force of Bruce was vigorously engaged. A band of English archers, standing on a knoll, poured their shafts very destructively upon the Scottish lines, until the Scottish King sent an officer with some horsemen to attack them in flank. This movement succeeded in scattering them, for they had nothing but their bows to fight with, and these were of no use at close quarters. Still the battle swayed backwards and forwards with no decisive result. At length a sight was seen on the hill behind, still called the *Gillies Hill*, which decided the day in favour of the Scotch. There the startled English soldiers, wearied with vain efforts to break the Scottish lines, beheld what seemed a new army, with banners flapping and flashing in the June sun. It was merely a crowd of those carters and hawkers, who follow an army in the field, and who had now, probably by a secret order of King Robert, hoisted upon the tent-poles of the Scottish camp all the sheets and rugs they could find. The stratagem succeeded—the English army fled in wild dismay and confusion—and Bannockburn became the grandest word in the military history of Scotland.

After thirteen years of wretched quarrelling and favouritism Edward II. was brought as a prisoner into the great hall of Kenilworth Castle, dressed in a common gown of black cloth, and there he heard the Speaker of the Parliament pronounce against him a sentence of dethronement, and saw the Royal Steward break in two pieces that white staff, which was emblematic of the royal power. Soon afterwards he was put into Berkeley Castle, and left there

in the custody of two men, called Thomas Gourney and William Ogle. One night in September screams of the most dreadful agony were heard by the people of the town, on whose edge the castle stood; and next day, when they came with pale faces to the castle-gate to ask what was the matter, they were told the King had died in the night of some internal disease, and they were invited into the castle to see the corpse, on whose still face the lines of horrible pain were yet to be traced. This is all history knows about the death of this wretched King. A dreadful report got abroad soon afterwards—and it may be true—that his keepers had killed him by running a rod of red-hot iron into his body.

## V.

## THE STORY OF THE BLACK PRINCE.

EDWARD PLANTAGENET, eldest son of King Edward III., and from the colour of a suit of armour, which he wore to set off the fairness of his skin and hair, commonly called the Black Prince, was born in 1330 at Woodstock. When he was sixteen he crossed with his warlike father into France, and was knighted on the wet sands of La Hogue, where the expedition had landed. A little later he fought his first fight on the field of Crecy.

Having marched towards Paris, King Edward found it necessary to turn off somewhat sharply towards the sea. But he could not get across the River Somme for a long time. At last, when he was almost in despair, a common man told him of a place called the White Spot, where he could carry his army over at low water. Starting from Abbeville at dawn, he reached the place when it was high water, and had to wait some hours, during which he was very anxious lest the King of France, who was chasing him, might come up. And, even when his men entered the water, they had a fierce fight with the French cavalry in the very centre of the current. However they found their way across, and took up a position near the forest of Crecy. There a great battle was fought, in which the Black Prince won his golden spurs. He was placed in command of the foremost of the three battalions, into which the English army was divided; and, when the English arrows flew as thick as flakes of snow among the French lines, strewing the ground with dead and wounded men, he was attacked with the full force of the bravest men in the hostile army, who had managed to pass the band of archers. King Edward, who commanded the reserve, was watching the progress of the battle through the narrow window of a windmill, which stood upon a little hill above the field, and must have felt no small anxiety mingling with his pride, when he saw the



dangerous position of his fair-haired son. He felt, however, that it would never do to show the slightest fear or doubt; and so, when a gentleman came spurring to the old mill with an eager request for help, the King replied—

“Is my son killed, wounded, or thrown to the ground?”

“No, sire,” said the knight; “but he is hard beset.”

“Then,” said Edward, “return to those who sent you, and tell them not to send again to me to-day, or expect that I shall come as long as my son has life; and say that I command them to let the boy win his spurs.”

And to this resolve King Edward kept, for during all that bloody day he did not so much as put on his helmet, but sat watching the prowess of his son and the valour of his troops.

The Black Prince was also present at a great naval battle, which was fought in the Strait of Dover between the fleets of England and Spain. One August evening, as King Edward, dressed in black velvet, was sitting on the high deck of his ship, listening to the music of a minstrel, the man, who sat in a little sentry-box on the top of the thick mast, called out, “Ho! I spy a sail.” Taking a cup of wine to strengthen themselves for the struggle, the English knights put on their helmets. A battle by sea was then almost the same as a battle by land, for after attempting to run each other down, the ships grappled together, and the fighting was performed with arrows and lances.

In scenes like these this celebrated warrior learned to use his sword and lance, and to direct the movements of armed men. When he acted as Governor of Guienne in the south of France, he penetrated central France almost to the Loire, and defeated the French King in a movement, which that monarch made to cut him off from the place he was retreating to. The battle of Poitiers was gained by ten thousand English over sixty thousand French, owing to the remarkable skill displayed in the choice of ground by the Black Prince. Placing his men among hedges and rows of vines, he prevented them from suffering from the full force of the charges made by the French cavalry; and by directing the operations of the archers, who in their green coats formed a great part of every English army then, he produced

confusion in the enemy's ranks, and at last scattered them in flight. King John of France was made prisoner in this battle; and, when the Black Prince made a triumphal entry into London, some time later, he paid this royal captive a graceful compliment by mounting a little black pony and riding as a page after the cream-coloured charger, on which John paced solemnly along.

The last days of the Black Prince were days of sorrow and gloom. His expedition into Spain may be looked upon as the point, at which his path of life turned downward to the grave. He went across the Pyrenees to aid the cause of a man called Peter the Cruel, from whom a step-brother had taken the crown of Castile. In the two battles of Najarra and Navaretta, fought not far from the Ebro, the English were victorious, and their triumphs replaced Pedro upon the throne he had lost. The ungrateful Spaniard then refused to pay his English soldiers, and Prince Edward was obliged to meet all the expenses of a campaign, which brought him nothing but empty glory. His only method of raising money then was to lay a hearth-tax on his French dominions, a proceeding which raised a cry of discontent from every cottage and every castle in the wide valley of the Garonne. But worse than debt resulted to the Black Prince from this ill-fated expedition. He caught a sickness in Spain, which ended in his death; and he never wore the English crown at all.

## VI.

## THE RIOT AND DEATH OF WAT TYLER.

IN the old town of Dartford, which stands on the Darent in Kent, about fifteen miles from London, there lived a workman, who was called from his occupation Walter the Tyler. History has shortened this name into Wat Tyler. It happened one day, when this man was engaged in tiling the roof of a house in the village, that the collector of the district came to his cottage to demand payment of a tax, which had been lately laid upon the English people, in order to meet the expenses of a French war. It was called the poll-tax, being laid on every head over fifteen years of age, and its amount was a shilling a year. Now it must not be forgotten that a shilling a year in the reign of Richard II. was almost the same as a pound would be now. There was a dispute about the age of a little girl, the daughter of the Tyler; and, when he heard of the rudeness and violence with which the collector was demanding the tax, he jumped off the roof, where he had been at work, and, running home, hit the insolent official so fiercely on the head with his lathing-staff as to knock him down dead.

In another part of Kent a priest named John Ball had for a long time been preaching every Sunday in the open air against the luxury of the rich and their oppression of the poor. He blamed them for wearing velvet and ermine, for drinking wine, and eating fine spiced dishes, while men as good as they, he said, or better, had nothing but black rye bread to eat and straw to lie on. And he spoke so fiercely and so often on the subject, that the poor people began to look upon these possessions of the rich as so much property of all mankind, in which they themselves ought to have a share. And so they were quite ready to join in a riot. There was a similar movement in Essex, where the leader of the people was Jack Straw.

All the poor and discontented people of the counties round

London crowded into one great mass on Blackheath, where there were gathered a hundred thousand men, armed with weapons of the strangest kind—rusty swords; bows cut from the yew-trees that filled the church-yards; and that favourite weapon of rustic rioters, scythe blades tied on poles. While they were on Blackheath, the widow of the Black Prince and mother of the boyish King, passing near, was stopped. She expected that they would kill her, but they were as yet in too good humour for such a crime: so they let her off for a few kisses, which she very prudently did not refuse to give, although the faces of the men were dirty and unshaven. At Rotherhithe on the Thames the King came rowing down in his royal boat to speak to them, and hear what they wanted. They roared out that he must come ashore; but he would not, and one of his attendants was foolish enough to mock at the dress of the mob, as being unfit for an audience with the King. London Bridge—which was then a sort of street lined with shops and houses, broken in the centre by a drawbridge to admit the passage of vessels up and down the stream, and closed at both ends by fortified gates—was shut against the rioters by order of the Mayor. But the mob threatened to burn every house in London, if the gates were not opened; and so they were admitted through fear.

I cannot describe the bloody doings of this time in London. Richard met the well-meaning portion of the mob at Mile End and induced them to go home by promising to grant their demands. But Tyler, with about 30,000 at his back, stayed behind to drink and kill and burn as they had been doing. The King tried hard to please them by offering to grant what they wished. But Tyler was so unreasonable that the negotiation failed. We can hardly wonder at this, when we know that one thing asked by Tyler was that the King should cut the heads off all the lawyers in England.

Tyler and his men came noisily into Smithfield, which was then, as the name means, a smooth or level green, on which the horse-fairs were held. It was still early in the morning, yet they were drunk with wine. The young King with only sixty horsemen was seen galloping quickly past,

when Tyler rode up and, pushing his horse's nose against the King's sleeve, spoke impudently and loudly.

"King," he said, "do you see all those men there?"

"Yes," said Richard. "Why do you ask?"

"Because," said the drunken artisan, clutching the hilt of his dagger, "they are all mine and have sworn to do what I bid them."

Then turning he saw an esquire, whom he knew and hated, among the retinue of the King.

"Give me that man's dagger," he fiercely cried.

It was given up for the sake of peace.

"Now, his sword," said Tyler.

But this could not be endured; and Sir William Walworth, the Mayor of London, who wore a short thick sword like a Turkish scimitar, struck him fiercely on the neck, so that he fell wounded from his horse. A sword was then passed by another person through his body, and, after beating the ground convulsively with his hands for a few seconds, he died. The moment his men saw him fall, they fitted arrows on their bowstrings, and prepared to send a shower of shafts upon the little party round the King. The delay of a few seconds would have brought certain destruction upon the royal guard. But Richard put spurs to his horse, and with outstretched hand rode up almost to the points of the threatening arrows, crying out, "Tyler was a traitor; I am your King; I will be your captain." This boldness prevented the flight of arrows; and the mob soon melted away, some running to hide among the growing corn, and some flinging their bows away and kneeling to ask for pardon. So ended this dangerous riot of Tyler.

## VII.

## WHAT JOHN WYCLIFFE DID AT LUTTERWORTH.

IN the reign of Edward III. a lad went up from Yorkshire to Oxford, where he soon became a Fellow and Master of a College. His name was John Wycliffe: and we should remember it gratefully, for he was the first man who set himself in earnest to reform the corrupted English Church. He spoke and wrote severely against the Friars, who used to travel about the country, selling old bones as relics of saints and little bottles of red water for the blood of the Saviour. He objected also to the payment of English money to the Pope. And, when he was made Professor of Divinity at Oxford, he taught doctrines, which many of the students eagerly embraced, and which caused his enemies to apply the name of Lollards to his disciples. But it was, when he was driven from his class-room by the authorities of the University he belonged to, that he did the great work, for which we remember him with pride and veneration.

That work was the translation of the Latin Bible into English. Some fragments of his gold-laced surplice, and an oaken pulpit, from which he preached, are still preserved in the church of Lutterworth in Leicestershire. But the Bible he translated, whose old-fashioned English we can scarcely read now without looking for the meaning of many words, is a better monument than these things. He used to work at this translation in the intervals of his parish duties, for there was much to do in the way of visiting the sick among the cabins which stood on the banks of the river Swift, and he had besides his sermons to prepare for Sunday. By steadily devoting some time every day to his sacred task and by calling in the aid of friends, who were well fitted by scholarship and spirit for such labour, he managed to complete the whole Bible in English before his death.

This happened from the effects of a stroke of paralysis, which fell upon him in the chancel of the church at Lutter-

worth. He was buried in the graveyard there : but, forty years afterwards, there came to wreak their miserable vengeance on his bones a band of men, who hated his memory, and would have killed or tortured the living apostle if they could. Going to his grave, they dug up the earth-soiled fragments of his body, and made a horrid bonfire of them. Then scraping up the ashes of the burned bones, they carried them to the little river Swift, that was flowing past, and scattered them on its water.

The followers of Wycliffe were, as I have said, called Lollards. They suffered very dreadful persecutions in the reigns of Henry IV. and Henry V. One of them called Sawtre, who was burned at Smithfield, was the first martyr in England for the Protestant cause. Another, named Sir John Oldcastle or Lord Cobham, also met a death of fire in defence of Lollardie. These were the first great soldiers in the battle of the English Reformation.

## VIII.

## HOTSPUR AND CHEVY CHASE.

THERE are two famous old English ballads, which relate a great struggle between those rival chieftains of the Marches—the Douglas and the Percy. The one, called *Chevy Chase*, is fictitious in its incidents: but the other, called the *Battle of Otterburn*, is founded upon a historical fact.

The ballad of Chevy Chase describes a great hunting of deer among the Cheviot Hills, which was undertaken by Percy in spite of the threats of the Douglas that he would meet him and prevent it. Beginning one Monday morning, the English bowmen did not cease to chase the deer with hounds and shoot them with arrows, until a hundred harts lay dead. The *mort* was then blown—a blast upon the bugle to announce the death of the game: and at its sound all the sportsmen came flocking to one spot to see the venison cut up. While they were thus engaged, one of them spied the Douglas coming with 2000 spearmen, at whose head he rode in glittering mail. Percy commanded his men to look to their bows. When Douglas came up, he fiercely demanded, who had given Percy leave to hunt there. Percy as fiercely replied, that they would hunt in Chevy Chase in spite of him and his men. Douglas then proposed to decide the dispute by a duel between Percy and himself, and Percy accepted the challenge; but the others were so keen for a fight, that arrows began at once to fly. The Douglas divided his host of spearmen into three bodies, and the English archers, slinging their bows behind them, drew their swords and began to fight at close quarters. When the Percy and the Douglas met, they hacked away at each other with their swords of Milan steel, until the blood began to bubble out through the clefts in their armour. Said Douglas then, “Percy, hold and surrender: and I will get our Scottish King Jamie to give thee an Earl’s wages, for thou art the manfullest man I ever met in the field.” “I yield,” said Percy, “to no man born of a woman.” Just then an arrow



pierced the lungs of Douglas, who fell dead. Sir Hugh Montgomery, a Scottish knight, then rode at full gallop upon the Percy and drove a spear right through his body, until its head stood out a full yard behind. Scarcely was this blow given, when an English archer, drawing his arrow to the hard steel, struck Sir Hugh on the breast with such force that the swan-feathers of the shaft were wet with his heart's blood. And so the fight raged from before noon until moonlight, so fatally that of the English archers only fifty-three out of fifteen hundred survived, and of the Scottish spearmen but fifty-five out of twenty hundred. The fierce prowess of Witherington is specially commemorated, who, when his legs were cut off, still fought upon the bleeding stumps. The biers of birch and hazel, the train of weeping widows, and the spreading news, which fills Edinburgh and London with sorrow, complete the romantic picture of this Border fight.

The ballad of Otterburn, probably written by the same hand; tells us that about the Lammas time, when farmers get in their hay, Douglas came into Northumberland, burning and robbing until he reached Newcastle, where Sir Harry Percy lay. Coming to the walls, Percy told Douglas, that if he waited for him at Otterburn, he would punish him for this trespass; and then, with the courtesy of knightly days, he let down a pipe of wine from the walls to entertain his foe. Douglas pitched his tent at Otterburn; and thither came Percy with the dawning day. The forces were very unequally matched, for there were forty-four thousand Scots against only nine thousand English. Just before the battle a letter came to Percy from his father, entreating him to wait, until some reinforcements reached him; but Percy would not delay the fight. The standard of the Douglas was a Bloody Heart surmounted by three Stars; that of the English the image of a White Lion. The Scots shouted "St. Andrew": the English answered with "St. George." Then the fight began. Douglas and Percy soon met, the armour of the latter disguising and protecting him: and in the fierce exchange of cut and thrust, Douglas, "bitten with a sharp sword," fell dead. Many other knights also fell: and of the forty-four thousand Scots only eighteen men survived,

while five hundred of the nine thousand Englishmen went living from the field. Percy was taken prisoner by the Scots, but was soon exchanged for the Sir Hugh Montgomery, whom the fictitious ballad dooms also to death.

The Harry Percy, who fought at Otterburn and who was familiarly called Hotspur, is a leading character in the first part of Shakspeare's historical play of King Henry the Fourth. But Shakspeare takes the usual liberty of a dramatist in making this gallant knight fall at Shrewsbury under the sword of Prince Henry. It was an arrow from some unknown hand, which pierced the brain and quenched the fiery life of this brave Percy.

The throne of King Henry the Fourth, who had usurped the royal seat, was assailed by many foes, among whom his former friends the Percys were remarkable. Even the ancient Border feud was forgotten for a time, for we find a Douglas leading his Scots to this war side by side with the banners of Northumberland. There was also in the rebel array a famous Welshman, Owen Glendower, who began by being a barrister and ended as a soldier. The armies of Henry and his foe met about three miles from Shrewsbury. Old Northumberland was not there, being sick, but his son Hotspur led the charge with great vigour, shouting "Esperance, Percy," in reply to the "St. George for us" of the royal soldiers. He and Douglas tried hard to find the King; but that prudent monarch had a number of his captains arrayed in armour exactly like his own, so that he escaped the danger of such a duel. We are told by tradition that Owen Glendower had reached the opposite bank of the Severn before the battle began; but that he was not able to ford the river, which was swollen with rain. Vexed to the last degree at this hindrance of his march, he is said to have climbed to the top of a tall oak-tree, whose grey-mossed shell is still to be seen at Chertsey, and from that perch to have watched the progress of the fight. He may have heard, too, amid the roar of battle and the fierce shouting of the combatants, some faint sound of that despairing cry, which rose from the rebel lines, when the fatal news of Hotspur's death spread from rank to rank. The arrow, which killed Percy, gave the victory to the prudent King.

## IX.

## THE ROYAL PRISONER OF WINDSOR.

A BOAT once left the little fishing village of North Berwick and rowed out to the Bass Rock, round whose solid mass the gulls and geese are always screaming. In it sat a little boy, and a man to whose care he had been confided. The boy was a Prince of Scotland, called James, Earl of Carrick; the man was Sir David Fleming of Cumbernauld, who had been deputed by old King Robert to send the royal child safe to France, lest Albany his cruel uncle might murder him, as there is too much reason to suspect young Rothesay had been murdered at Falkland. Soon afterwards a ship came sailing to the Bass, and, taking the boy on board, turned her prow southward. Off the coast of Yorkshire, however, some English ships appeared and captured the Scottish vessel. The Prince was taken to the Tower of London, and after some changes of residence was lodged in a tower of Windsor Castle.

The time of his captivity was not wasted. He learned of course all the knightly accomplishments of his time—to fence, to ride, to run, to play and sing, to hunt, to shoot with the bow, and to handle the lance in tilt. But he learned more than these common things. He learned to read and admire the poetry of Chaucer and Gower, and, when his mind was filled with the spirit of their verse, he too began to write. In *The King's Quhair*, his principal poem, which was written during the time of his imprisonment he describes the history of a morning in May, which left its impression upon his whole life, and had no small share in making him a poet.

Awaking from sleep, he began to read that famous book, which Boethius wrote and Alfred translated, but, soon tiring of study, lay down again to think. And of what do prisoners think but of their prison walls and of the free green fields they cannot see? At the sound of the matin

bell, ringing for early prayers, he rose again and went to the window in order to hear the song of a nightingale, that sat on the green boughs of a juniper tree. Below, walking in the garden, he saw a young lady of the Court, who seemed to him the loveliest flower there. Her dress was very rich and splendid. Made of white tissue, it shone with precious stones—pearls, emeralds, and sapphires. Round her white neck was a chain of gold-work, from which hung a ruby shaped like a heart. Her head, all decked with golden spangles, was also adorned with feathers, red, white, and blue, woven into the form of a chaplet. But her personal beauty was far beyond the splendour of her dress; and when, turning her face away, she wandered on out of sight, the poet felt as if the day had been turned into night.

This is the account we have from King James I. of Scotland concerning the first glimpse he caught of the Lady Joan Beaufort, who afterward became his wife. Between that May morning and the February day in 1424, on which the marriage took place, which made Joan a Queen, James took a share in the war, which Henry V. was waging in France.

The chief event of this war was the battle of Azincourt, which was fought in 1415. Sailing across from Southampton to the mouth of the Seine, King Henry V. of England laid siege to the town of Harfleur, which he soon caused to surrender. He then began to march along the sea-side towards Calais; but, when he came to the river Somme, hoping to cross it at the White Spot, where Edward III. had crossed before Crecy, he found that impossible owing to the number of French soldiers at the place. Then, marching quickly up the stream, he found a ford at last, and went across, having first made all his archers cut thick stakes of wood, six feet long and sharpened to a point at each end. An enormous army of Frenchmen gathered to the battle round the village of Azincourt, and the two foes sat by their fires through a long wet October night, waiting for the dawn which was to decide the issue of the fight. Henry, who rode a grey horse, and wore a jewelled crown of gold over his helmet of shining steel, formed his archers into a body like a wedge, and desired them to plant the stakes, they had cut, in a slanting

direction, so that the charging horsemen of the enemy might run upon the points. Before he rode away, he told them that the French had resolved to cut three fingers off the right hand of every archer they took prisoner. He then gave them food and wine.

In disposing of his little force Henry took advantage of the same thing as aided Bruce at Bannockburn. He placed his men, where the French could not attack him with a broad front, whose wings might curve round and encircle his little band. And, knowing the value of stratagems, he arranged that a party of archers should lie in ambush in a field behind the French, and that another band in the same quarter of the field should set a village on fire. About twelve o'clock the English King cried out, "Banners advance;" and the general of the archers gave a signal by throwing his baton in the air. Then the shooting began. While the arrows were emptying saddles in great numbers, nearly all the French horsemen, who wore suits of heavy plate armour, stuck deep in the wet and clayey soil of a ploughed field, affording to the archers, who ran in among them with axe and bill-hook, an easy prey. The lines of the French army came up so eagerly to the rescue, that some of them slipped and fell, and then the advancing lines behind tripped over these, so that a scene of terrible confusion occurred. In three hours the English had won a complete victory.

King James I. of Scotland was not present at this battle, but later in the war he went to France to fight on the side opposite to that taken by his countrymen. After the Treaty of Troyes had given Henry the French crown upon the death of the present wearer, the English continued to make war against the Dauphin or eldest son of the French King. And the captive King of Scotland engaged to serve under the banner of Henry at this time, on condition of being permitted to go back to Scotland three months after his return from France. His foe and fellow-countryman was an Earl of Buchan, who held then the position of Constable. The principal achievement of James in France was the capture of the city of Dreux, which is on the river Blaise about forty miles from Paris.

Returning to his native land after an imprisonment in England of more than eighteen years, James set himself sternly to curb the nobles, who had been accustomed to defy all law. It cost him his life. Thirteen years had passed after his return, when one winter night a band of men in armour broke into the monastery at Perth, where he was staying with his Queen. Hearing the noise of their coming, he tore up the flooring and leaped into a vault below. But one of them knew of this place. Two men sprang in with knives; another followed with a sword; and, struggling long and bravely against unequal odds, the Poet-King of Scotland sank dead with sixteen stabs in vital parts of his body.

## X.

## JOAN OF ARC.

BELONGING equally to French and English history, the story of the French girl, whose name this chapter bears, relates a crisis or turning-point in the struggle, which had been going on for a hundred years between the rival neighbours, and whose object on the part of the English was the establishment of an empire beyond the Strait of Dover.

The city of Orleans, standing chiefly on the northern bank of the Loire, was closely besieged by an English army and was in danger of being taken, when one day a peasant girl appeared before the governor of a distant town called Vaucouleurs, and said that she had been sent to him by God. She was only seventeen, pretty, with black hair and deep-set earnest eyes. Brought up in a simple way in her native village of Domremy, the little shepherdess had been used to spend long summer days upon the hills, dreaming of the saints and martyrs, of whom such wonderful stories were common. Occasionally she heard of the war, but nothing except the faintest echo of the storm had as yet reached the mountain glen in which she lived. When she grew up, her piety became more fervent still; and more than once she saw strange lights and heard strange Voices, which commanded her to go to the Dauphin's aid. Then she beheld a vision of two saints with gleaming wings and jewelled crowns, who stood surrounded by a cloud of light and spoke words sweeter than any earthly music. While rapt in such remarkable day-dreams, her spirit was rudely stirred by the violence of some soldiers, who entered the glen and burned the parish church. Loudly then the Voices began to call on her to rise and deliver her country.

The governor of Vaucouleurs, to whom she went at first, because she had an uncle who made cart-wheels in that town, considered her either a madwoman or a witch. But the townspeople, convinced by her spotless life and deep devotion that she was sincere, were strong and earnest in her

cause. At last it was arranged, that she should go to the Dauphin and make known to him her mission. She dressed herself like a man, mounted a horse, wore a sword and spurs; and, thus equipped, set out for Chinon. Dangers and difficulties beset her path. The very servants, who escorted her, had thoughts at one time of flinging her over a precipice they were passing. And, when Charles first heard of her approach, he burst into a fit of loud laughter at the idea of France being delivered by a young girl, when men in armour could not save it. But the simple and natural manner of Joan won a way for her irresistibly.

"Gentle Dauphin," said she, "I am Joan the Maid. I come with a commission from the King of Heaven to drive your enemies out of Orleans, and to conduct you to Rheims, where you shall receive the crown of France, which is your right."

From this straightforward declaration she never departed. And all the most learned priests and doctors could not make her out to be anything but a simple sincere country-girl, bent upon fulfilling a mission, which she firmly believed to have been intrusted to her directly by God. After some hesitation and delay she was promoted to the rank of a General, and received a staff of attendants and a guard of horsemen. She wore complete armour; her sword was an old blade, marked with five crosses; her banner was of white satin with lilies of gold upon it, and was inscribed with sacred names and figures; and she rode upon a milk-white charger. The soldiers of that day were, as soldiers often are, very wicked and brutal; but she would have none around her except men, who paid attention regularly to their religious duties.

Moving from Blois to Orleans with some of the greatest generals of France and a great number of provision carts, the Maid approached the city by water, and got safely in, while the people within the walls were engaged in making a furious attack upon the lines of the besiegers. For seven months the English army had been trying in vain to take this important post, but now their hopes of success grew very small and faint. Joan, when safely in the town, wrote a letter to the English commander, and, not content with this, got up



on a wall to make a speech to their advanced posts, in which she threatened them with woe and shame, if they did not go away from France. The English officer, who commanded at that place, roughly told her to go home and mind her cows. Then came a large French army of reinforcement, which the English, as if paralyzed by the presence of her they called the Witch, stupidly allowed to pass without hindrance into the city. Starting suddenly from her bed and calling for her sword, Joan insisted that they should all go out at once and fight the English. They went and captured a tower, which the English had seized before. But the leaders were not always ready to obey the Maid; and in a day or two she had a furious quarrel with some of them, who desired to be cautious, while she was in favour of a sudden dash upon the two great towers, which the English had taken on the south end of the broken bridge. The common soldiers were so fond of Joan, that their captains were forced to give her her own way. In the face of a great storm of arrows and stone-balls shot from cannons, the French attacked the towers, but tried in vain for four hours to take them. At last Joan took a light scaling ladder in her hand, placed it against the wall, and was going up, when an archer, who had been watching her, drew an arrow and shot her in the neck. She turned over and fell into the ditch, from which a French knight hastily carried her to a safe place. When the arrow was drawn out, the poor girl cried and twisted her hands together with the agonizing pain, but she soon grew calmer and began to pray; and in a little while she was again at the ditch, directing the attack. Her appearance so frightened the English, who thought that her witchcraft had enabled her to heal a deadly wound, or that she had actually risen from the dead, that they gave up the towers, and next day abandoned the siege of Orleans.

Joan was greatly honoured at the court of Charles, when she went there; but she told the pleasure-seekers, that it was no time for piping and dancing, since there was so much to do in a short time. The last words are thought to have been used in reference to the doom of an early death, which she had foretold for herself. She then took a fortress and won a battle, in which the great Englishman Talbot

was made prisoner. And then followed the coronation of Charles at Rheims, on which occasion Joan stood by the altar with her white banner in her hand, and, when the golden circlet was placed on the head of Charles, knelt down weeping at his feet and said,—

“Gentle King, now is accomplished the will of God, who would have you come hither to Rheims to receive your consecration, and show that you are the true King, to whom the kingdom of France rightly belongs.”

Soon after this she broke her sacred sword, while beating with its flat side a woman, whom she had forbidden to stay in the camp; and we may consider this accident an emblem of a change in her fortunes.

In the next spring she went with her soldiers to the city of Compiègne, which was besieged by the Burgundians and their English allies, and forced her way into the town. She soon made one of her usual dashes out on the besiegers, and gained some success; but on her return to the town, just as her force had gained the drawbridge, and she, fighting to the last, was about to ride over it, an archer caught her foot and pulled her from the saddle. Her ungrateful troops let her lie, and ran in across the bridge, while she, sword in hand, struggled to her feet, and tried to fight her way after them. It was useless. She was surrounded and made prisoner.

A year later she died by fire in the fish-market of Rouen. In vain the English, to whom her captor sold her, tried to make her acknowledge error and imposture. Frightened by the prospect of the stake, she was at one time almost on the point of doing so, when a sacred light seemed to shine into her cell, and the old sweet Voices came stealing through the gloom of the night to cheer and strengthen her girlish heart. Next day she showed her resolve by putting on once more a soldier's dress, which she had laid aside. This sealed her doom. Carried in a cart to the place of execution, she was tied to a stake, and a cap with four dreadful words, “Heretic, Relapsed, Apostate, Idolater” was put upon her head. The match was then applied to the fagots, and amid the crackling flames and rolling smoke Joan died with a cross in her hand, and the name of the Saviour on her lips.

## XI.

## WHAT THE PLUCKING OF TWO ROSES MEANT.

ONE day in the garden of the Temple, which stretched its grassy beds and fair shrubberies down to the margin of the Thames, a hot dispute took place between two rival bands of courtiers, who had strayed out to inhale the sweet freshness of the summer air. The Earl of Somerset rudely declared that Richard Plantagenet, the representative of the House of York, must be looked upon as a mere yeoman, because his father, the Earl of Cambridge, had in the reign of Henry V. been executed for treasonable rebellion. Richard retorted violently, and, plucking a white rose from a briar that grew near, called upon all his friends in the crowd to follow his example as a sign of their sympathy with him in the quarrel. Somerset tore a red rose from another bush; and the party broke up after some fierce words of abuse and menace—each carrying in his bonnet or his breast a blossom, which showed his feeling in the controversy. The parting words, which Shakspeare puts into the mouth of angry Plantagenet, were realized with a dreadful accuracy,—

“This quarrel will drink blood another day.”

In this manner it is said that the rival emblems were chosen, which gave their names to the great civil war called the War of the Roses. Somerset and York strove for the high position of Protector, when the insanity of King Henry VI. made it necessary to appoint some one to that powerful office. York got the prize and kept it for a little while, during which he locked his rival Somerset up in the Tower. But Henry grew better; and the positions of the contending princes would probably have been reversed, only that York began a war.

The first battle was fought on a summer day at St. Albans in Hertfordshire; and there conspicuous in the fight was

the gigantic figure of the man, who most of all deserves to be considered the hero of this war—Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, and placed above the Kings of his day by the lofty historical title of "The King-maker." His manly beauty was of the same kind as that which attracted admiration to Richard of the Lion Heart. He had the same curling brown hair, brave blue eye, and rich bronzed cheek—the same fierce ardour in the fight—and the same lavish generosity of character and hearty frankness of address. The doors of his palace in London were never locked; any one who chose was at liberty to come in and cut a juicy slice from one of the *six oxen*, which supplied roast-beef to his breakfast table every morning, and drink a deep draught from the flagons, that were always foaming over with strong brown ale. And, if a self-invited guest like this, knew a servant in the household of the Stout Earl, he was allowed to carry off on his dagger as much cooked meat as the steel blade could hold.

Of course it would be impossible in this book of stories to relate the whole history of the dreadful war, which bears so pretty a name, and which began with the skirmish of St. Albans. If it had not been for the bravery and spirit of Margaret of Anjou, the wife of poor imbecile King Harry, the cause of the House of Lancaster, whose friends wore the Red Rose, would have quickly sunk and perished. It was not so much for her husband, as for her son, that this heroic and dauntless woman clung so fiercely and so desperately to the English throne, and gathered armies so untiringly only to be beaten and to begin again.

Among all the battles of the rival Roses there are four, whose incidents or consequences make them especially memorable—Wakefield, Towton, Barnet, Tewkesbury.

While York was enjoying the festival of Christmas in Sendal Castle, above the town and green of Wakefield in Yorkshire, Margaret came down from the Border with an army, and defied him to come out to battle, jeering at him for being afraid to face a woman on the field of war. Stung into imprudence by her mockery, and professing that he would never shut himself up in dread of "a scolding woman, whose weapons were her tongue and nails", he gave word

to his banner-man to carry the colours out from the castle-gate. He saw before him a body of men under his old foe Somerset, and supposed that this formed the whole of Margaret's force. But, while he went blindly on to fight with this mass of men, he was leading his force between two hidden bands; and these, as soon as he was completely in the trap, rushed out of their ambush and attacked him in flank and rear. He was struck dead himself before very long, and Lord Clifford, finding the body, chopped off the head, put on it a crown of paper, and brought it as a present to Queen Margaret, who raised a horrible laugh of triumph, when she saw the bloody head and heard the cruel jokes with which he handed her the gift. We can almost forgive Clifford's brutality, when we remember the spirit of the time; but he had done that day a deed, which cannot be pardoned by the historian. As he was riding over the Calder Bridge, he met a priest and a pretty little fair-haired boy of twelve. They had come out from the castle to watch the fighting, and were hurrying away from the field, when they saw that the battle was lost. Clifford rudely asked the name of the boy; and, having found from the trembling priest, that it was Edmund, Earl of Rutland, a son of York, he sprang down to the ground, and, seizing the child, who struggled and prayed for pity in vain to "*Sweet Clifford, gentle Clifford, good Clifford,*" plunged his dagger into the little breast, and then, tossing the palpitating body contemptuously aside, rode away to mutilate the corpse of poor little Rutland's father. No wonder that the memory of the "Black-faced Lord" is hated by all lovers of true chivalry and manhood.

Next spring, a few days after Edward, the son of slain York, had seized the English throne, the bloodiest battle of the war was fought at Towton near the city of York. Before the battle began, an incident occurred, which showed the romantic and chivalrous nature of warfare in that age. The Earl of Warwick, taunted by King Edward for expressing a doubt of the victory, drew his sword, kissed the hilt, which was shaped like a cross, and, taking a firm hold of the reins, plunged the blade into the side of his rearing war-horse before all the assembled soldiers,—

"Let him flee that will: I will tarry with him that will tarry with me!" said the great Captain.

And at once the hearts of the Yorkists revived, when they saw the King-maker thus reduced to fight on foot like the meanest soldier in the field. The battle began, raged, and ended in the thick of a snow-storm; and the wonderful sight of *red* snow, which at a later time so amazed the Arctic voyagers, must have been widely spread around the landscape of Towton Field, when the carnage of the dreadful Sunday was over, and the bodies of 30,000 soldiers lay silent among the drifts.

Ten years of great change passed by; and Warwick met the King, in whose cause he had fought at Towton, on the fatal heath of Barnet. All night Warwick's cannon played away at nothing, for they were not aimed at all at the position of the Yorkist lines. When morning came, there was so thick a fog that sometimes it was hard to distinguish friends from foes. A mistake occurred, which caused great confusion and fears of treason in the Lancastrian lines; for in the fog a band of archers, mistaking the *star*, which Oxford's men wore on their coats, for the *blazing sun*, which glittered on the Yorkist surcoats, shot at them, and sent Oxford in flight from the field. Warwick fought on foot, as he had fought at Towton, but his figure was lost in the crush and crowd; so that while King Edward rode his white horse in the eyes of all his host, cheering them with the glitter of the crown that adorned his helmet, the soldiers of Warwick looked in vain for their great captain and hero, and soon gave way to despair. Seeing this, the King-maker rushed into the press of the fight, and there found the soldier's death he had so often dared on other fields.

Twenty days later, Margaret and her son were defeated at Tewkesbury. She escaped in a carriage; the Prince was captured by Sir Richard Croft and brought before the King.

"How did you dare," said Edward of York, "to display your banner in our realm?"

"To recover my father's rights," fearlessly replied the

other Edward ; “ and how dared you, his subject, to display the colours of rebellion ? ”

A blow on the mouth from the iron glove of the King was the answer to this haughty speech ; and some of those present, taking this as the signal for murder, dragged the wretched youth from the room and killed him with their swords. Dark stains, said to be the marks of his blood, used to be shown on the planking of the floor.

## XII.

## THE LITTLE PRINCES IN THE TOWER.

IN the inner ward of the Tower of London there yawns a broad low-browed archway, over which is a little square grated window, divided into two parts by a shaft of stone. The arch supports, and the window lights an antique room, in which one of the most dreadful crimes connected with English history is said to have been perpetrated—a crime which has stained the whole building of the gateway with the name of the Bloody Tower.

I now proceed to tell this mysterious story in its usual shape; but before doing so, I must remind my young readers that it is a story, which has never been distinctly proved to be true; and that in an early chapter I shall have to deal with the adventures of a young man, claiming to be in very deed the younger victim of this alleged murder.

It is said then that, while Richard III. was at the city of Gloucester, in the course of that royal travelling through the country which was called a Progress, he sent a man called John Green, who was a confidential servant, to the governor of the Tower, Sir Robert Brackenbury, with a letter desiring that official to put to death, somehow or other, the two little Princes who were then confined in the fortress. The boys were the young King Edward V. and his younger brother, Richard, Duke of York. Brackenbury was too much frightened at so horrible an order to execute it, and he refused to commit the crime, sending back Green to Richard with a message to that effect. Richard had by this time gone to Warwick. When he heard of what he would call the cowardice of Brackenbury, he chose a man, whose heart was like iron, and sent him—Sir James Tyrrel, the Master of the Horse—with a written order to Brackenbury, commanding that person to hand over to Tyrrel the keys and full control of the Tower for four-and-twenty hours. Brackenbury could do nothing but comply



with this order, although he must have known very well what its dreadful meaning was. Tyrrel, who, bad as he was, did not like to do the murderous deed himself, got two men—one a professional murderer called Miles Forest, and the other, John Dighton, a big rough groom—and sent them by night to the chamber, where the little Princes lay asleep. With hushed footsteps and shaded lamp they stole up the stone staircase to the room, and there saw the two boys,—

"Girdling one another  
Within their alabaster innocent arms:  
Their lips were four red roses on a stalk,  
Which in their summer beauty kissed each other.  
A book of prayers on their pillow lay."

Vile and hardened as the men were, this sight of innocence and affection almost melted them to repentance. But the thought of the reward they were to get hardened them again. And with hasty and violent movements they rolled the bed-clothes over the mouths of the sleeping boys, and heaped the pillows on the top, pressing down with all their might to stop the breath of their poor little victims. At first there were some convulsive struggles; but the strength of two huge men soon overpowered the weak and slender limbs, which grew loose and still, as murder did its dreadful work. Tyrrel then came in to see and touch the bodies, which were still warm and limber. Having stripped the dead boys naked, the murderers then dug a deep hole at the foot of the stair-case, flung them in, and piled over them a great heap of stones.

Thus runs the story of a crime, which, if ever committed, blackens one of the darkest pages in the history of England. But, as I said before, we cannot be certain that this account is true. It was written by a statesman and historian, named Sir Thomas More, who rose to greatness under the first and second Tudor Kings, and who would take the view of Richard's crimes most pleasing to them. And, since Henry VII. got his crown by the fall of Richard on the field of Bosworth, it was natural that the victor should gladly see it written in history that the man, whom he had flung from a throne into a grave, was a criminal of the darkest dye.

## XIII.

## THE BATTLE OF BOSWORTH FIELD.

THE battle, which brought to a close the famous war of the Roses, was fought on Redmore Plain, about a mile to the south of Market-Bosworth in Leicestershire. From this town it received the name, by which it is most generally called—the battle of Bosworth. The leaders of the war were Richard Plantagenet, a little sharp-faced man, with one shoulder somewhat higher than the other, from which slight deformity he was branded by his enemies with the name of Hunchback; and Henry Tudor or Tydder, a grey-eyed cautious man with long yellow hair. The former represented the House of York; the latter, the House of Lancaster.

Sailing over from France to Milford Haven, an inlet which cuts deep into the heart of Pembrokeshire in Wales, Henry, Earl of Richmond, who had long been an exile from England, brought with him about 5000 men. For the purpose of pleasing the Welsh and attracting them to his banner, he set up the Red Dragon, which formed their ancient standard. His name was derived from Owen Tudor, who married the widow of King Henry V., the victor of Azincourt. Marching in a north-easterly direction through Wales, Richmond was gladdened by seeing the mountaineers gathering round him, as he moved on with swift and stealthy step. Richard gathered a faithless army round him in Nottinghamshire, but soon took up his final position on the hill-encircled plain near Bosworth.

The genius of Shakspeare has dwelt upon the horrors of the night that preceded the battle, making a procession of pale and bloody ghosts rise to upbraid King Richard with his cruelty, and threaten him with a dreadful fate on the coming day. The truth is, he passed a most wretched night, and was disturbed by dreadful dreams. He knew that the kingdom was passing from him, and that in all

likelihood a great part of the army, which desertion had already thinned, would cross over to his foe.

But his heart did not utterly fail him, until, mounted on "White Surrey," his favourite charger, he was passing in front of his men, and saw the well-known banner of Lord Stanley joining the ranks of Richmond with 3000 men. He knew then that all chance of winning the game he had been playing so long and cunningly was lost, and he took the instant resolution of selling his life as dearly as he could. He was conspicuous in the front, for he wore a golden crown upon his helmet; and every soldier in both armies knew who it was, that went dashing on a white horse across the intervening space, screaming "Treason!" and levelling his lance at the band of captains, who stood round Henry Tudor. The combat was brief and brilliant. He drove the point of his lance through the standard-bearer of the Lancastrian champion, cut down another knight with a sudden blow of his sword, and was almost within reach of his hated rival, when he was pulled from his horse and pierced with many blades. His crown rolled off into a furze-bush close to the scene of this encounter, and was picked up by the deserter Stanley, who placed it upon the head of Henry.

The battle of Bosworth Field is a remarkable turning-point in English history, not only because on that bloody plain fell the last of the line of French Kings, which came over with the Conqueror from Normandy, but more especially because it marks the end of what may be called the chivalric period of our national story. We have as yet seen nothing to indicate that the time was coming, when Britain would become the mistress of the ocean, gathering cargoes into her ships on every shore, and scattering the navies of her enemies in every sea.

## XIV.

## THE STORY OF PERKIN WARBECK.

THE whole reign of Henry VII. is full of plots and impostures : but there is one story so romantic and striking that it stands out conspicuous among all the rest. It is the story of Perkin Warbeck, who pretended to be the young Duke of York, one of the two Princes believed to have been murdered in the Tower.

This adventurer, who certainly looked like a Prince for he was very handsome and graceful, made his first public appearance at the Cove of Cork in the south of Ireland. His rich silken dress, his fine manly appearance, and his romantic and wonderful story, which he told everywhere, made an impression on a few of the nobles in that part of the kingdom. But the people did not rise in his favour, because a little before a baker's son named Simnel had deceived them and brought them into considerable trouble by a somewhat similar imposture. Perkin accordingly crossed over to France upon the pressing invitation of the King.

At Paris he was treated at first with remarkable honour. A guard of soldiers was given to him and a number of English exiles came round him, as the representative of the White Rose. It so happened, however, that the King of France found it convenient to make a treaty with Henry of England, which obliged him to dismiss this pretender to the English throne from the boundaries of France.

There was a place of refuge close at hand. The Court of the Duchess of Burgundy, who was the sister of our King Edward IV. and therefore an ardent lover of the White Rose, had already given her support to the imposture of Simnel the baker's son. She received Perkin with still greater joy, called him "The White Rose of England," and gave him a guard of thirty men, who carried halberds to defend him. A plot was then actively set on foot; and

all sorts of letters and messages ran back and forward between England and Flanders, aided greatly by the trade in wool and cloth, which existed then between these opposite shores of the German Ocean. Henry VII., however, was always on the watch, and he soon found out what was going on. He discovered, as was said, that this fine-looking young man, who pretended to be a Prince, was nothing more than a valet or courier out of place, the son of a Jewish merchant of Tournay. And so, by bribing Sir Robert Clifford, who principally managed the correspondence between Perkin and his English friends, Henry found out who these English friends were, and seized them all on one day. There were amongst them lords, baronets, esquires, and priests, besides many meaner men. Three of them lost their heads. And so for a time Perkin's plot was nipped in the bud. In his blind fury he made a sudden voyage over to Deal with a few hundred men: but the people there, instead of joining the White Rose banner, attacked his men, when they landed, and drove them to their ships, taking nearly 200 prisoners. These were nearly all strung up on gibbets along the shore they had foolishly invaded.

After trying Ireland again, Perkin Warbeck went across the channel to Scotland, where James IV. was King. As James and Henry were then on unfriendly terms, the adventurer was received with the warmest welcome at the Scottish court, and was called "cousin" by the King, who gave splendid feasts and got up splendid tournaments in honour of his handsome guest. Perkin found in Scotland a wife as well as a warm reception, for James, in order to make clear to all the world, that he considered Perkin no impostor but the veritable Richard, Duke of York, gave him the hand of the beautiful Catherine Gordon, daughter of the Earl of Huntly, and a near blood-relation of his own. But Perkin wanted more than such treatment and such marks of confidence. He wanted King James to aid him in the invasion of England, and after a while the monarch consented to do so. Perkin sent some men before him to try and kindle a rebellion in his favour; but the English peasants would not take fire at all. By means of spies and bribed men Henry of England knew all that was going on in

the Scottish camp, and one of his secret adherents agreed to try and capture Warbeck in his tent during some long winter night. This plan failed, however, and the Pretender crossed the Border with the Scottish King. They soon came back, having fought no battle, for food grew scarce and the Englishmen were staunch to their King. James soon made a second raid as far as the river Tees: but he fell back to his own land, when Surrey came marching northward with an English army. It was then clear that Perkin had no hope left on the Scottish side; and this grew clearer still a little later, when it was buzzed abroad that a marriage was arranged between King James IV. of Scotland and a princess of the Tudor House. A little ship in the harbour of Ayr shook out her sails and turned her prow southward, bearing from the Scottish shore a pair, who were called the Duke and Duchess of York—whom we shall call Warbeck and his beautiful and faithful bride. She was very true to him: we shall see how true and loyal *he* was to her. The ship carried them from Ayr to Cork, and thence they soon crossed to Cornwall.

This part of England had for a long time been in a state resembling a violent inflammation of the foot or some extremity of the body. It was this, which attracted Perkin thither, for he thought that the discontented and rebellious mountaineers and miners, who objected to pay their taxes, would surely rise and fight for him, when only a little before they had gladly followed the flag of an attorney and even of a blacksmith. He did certainly find, soon after his landing at Whitsand Bay, a ragged and undrilled collection of men round his standard to the number of 10,000. But they had no cannon and a very scanty supply of arms. Leaving his wife in a place of safety, he advanced to besiege Exeter, the chief city in that quarter, within whose walls were collected all the great people of the neighbouring counties. In vain they attacked the gates; so sore was the fire of the guns, to which they could not reply, that they fell back and marched away quickly to Taunton. There in the sweet glades of Taunton Dean they saw a great royal army, with tents whitening the September fields. Warbeck in the dusk of evening spoke stoutly to his men, as he rode along

the lines, of the battle that would be fought next day : but, when dusk had turned to night, he mounted a swift horse, and galloped away at full speed to the Abbey of Beaulieu in the New Forest, where he found sanctuary, thinking that they would not attempt to seize him in so holy a place. Next morning his men found themselves without a leader : his wife wept for the loss of a protector whom she loved. Some of the former were hanged by order of the King, and to the latter there came quickly a band of horsemen, who brought her before the angry monarch. But she blushed and looked so beautiful and was so sweetly sorry for her husband's mean desertion of his men and her, that Henry did not punish her in the least, but made her an attendant upon his Queen Elizabeth.

When Perkin gave himself up to the soldiers of the King, which he did upon a promise of pardon, Henry peeped at this handsome but cowardly disturber of his peace from behind a screen. Perkin was soon afterwards led on horseback up and down the streets of London, and was then put into the Tower. He made an attempt to escape ; and, when he was brought back, he was put into the stocks at Westminster and Cheapside, and obliged, while the people jeered at and pelted him, to read a paper, which pretended to be a true account of his own origin and early life, and which declared him to have been, not a Prince and Duke, but a shopkeeper's son and common servant, who, having put on a fine silk coat, was mistaken by silly people at Cork for a Prince. There was soon afterwards in Kent another attempt to overturn Henry's throne, in which a shoemaker's son and a monk were the principal actors. When this was crushed, Henry thought that Perkin's death was necessary for his own safety. And so the hero of so much mystery and adventure ended his short and troubled life upon the gallows at Tyburn. There are strong suspicions that Henry managed to bring about the necessity of his death, first by allowing him to escape, and afterwards by secretly exciting the rising in Kent, which was made an excuse for the execution of Perkin and other men.

## XV.

## THE VOYAGE OF CABOT.

FIVE years after Columbus discovered the West Indies, two *carvels*, as a certain kind of ship was then called, set sail from Bristol on a day in early summer. They were fitted out at the expense of a merchant from Venice, named John Cabot, and with him on deck, as the vessels left the river, stood his son Sebastian, a man of very gentle manners and possessed of great skill in drawing "cards of the sea," which we call maps. They had received from King Henry VII. a patent, which gave them authority to take possession in his name of any lands, which they might discover across the ocean. And their great object was to reach India by voyaging to the northwest, that they might establish for themselves a trade in the spices of that hot and fertile land. Some smaller ships, laden with goods such as coarse cloth and lace, accompanied the vessels of the Venetians.

With three hundred men the brave Italians faced the dangers of the ocean, expecting to reach Cathay or China, and then turn southward towards India. They little knew of the two enormous piles of continent, which stood between them and the place they desired to reach. Sailing away and away, they came at last among great mountains of ice, floating in the sea, and noticed with wonder, how short the nights were growing. At last, instead of seeing the sun set one evening, they saw him merely dip under the edge of the land, and come rising into the sky again. One morning in June at five o'clock land was seen, and two names were given to it—the one, *Prima Vista*, on account of its being the first land they saw; the other, *St. John's*, because it was discovered on St. John the Baptist's Day. It was a part of Newfoundland that they saw. Landing, they took possession of the place for King Henry. It seemed a barren soil. The inhabitants wore furs, and used as weapons bows and arrows, pikes, clubs, and slings. Of these men Cabot



took three, whom he brought over as a present to the King. There were also on the cold rocks white bears, fond of plunging into the sea and coming up with a salmon, which, Cabot innocently observes, made them less desirous of eating men. There were plenty of seals, soles a yard long, and so great an abundance of a fish, called *baccalao*, that the ship was sometimes, we are gravely told, impeded in her course by their swarming shoals. The hawks, the partridges, and the eagles that were seen were as black as ravens: and the deer were much larger than any in England. Of copper there appeared to be great abundance.

Such was the description of Newfoundland and Labrador, as they appeared to their discoverers, the Cabots, who little knew what great result their voyage had come to. While the honour of discovering the *islands* of America belongs to the Genoese sailor Columbus, the honour of discovering the *mainland* of the great Western or New World belongs to those two Venetians, whom an English King sent out from an English sea-port.

When the Cabots saw the land stretching away to the north, they put their ships about, and ran down along the coast of America as far almost as Florida, in the hope of finding an open channel, which might carry them to India. This hope was strengthened, when they observed a strong current setting towards the west. But they found no break in the shore, except a bay or a river-mouth: and mutiny, one of the worst difficulties these early discoverers had to fight against, obliged them to turn their ships towards England without having made any further discoveries.

We lose sight of old John Cabot soon after this: but Sebastian rose to great fame in both England and Spain. He received the name of the Grand Pilot; was honoured by King Edward VI. with a pension of nearly £200 a year; and was called in the paper, which conferred the gift, the Great Seaman.

## XVI.

## A FIELD OF BLOOD AND A FIELD OF GOLD.

THE motives, which led King James IV. of Scotland to invade England in the reign of his brother-in-law, were very mixed and very mysterious. But the fact of the invasion and its tragic ending is unmistakable and plain.

Having reduced to submission some castles by the Tweed, James of the Iron Belt, as he was called from a penitential chain he wore round his waist, took up a well-chosen position on Flodden Hill, west of the Till, which runs northward to the Tweed. The Earl of Surrey was moving from Newcastle to meet him there. It was customary in those days to send heralds and challenges from leader to leader; and crooked old Surrey despatched Red Cross with a challenge to fight on the next Friday. James accepted the challenge courteously. But many of his nobles objected to meeting the English in battle under present circumstances. Among them were Lord Lindsay, whom James in a fury threatened to hang on his own castle-gate, and Archibald Bell-the-Cat, the old Earl of Angus, whom the King roughly desired to go home, if he were afraid. The old man could not help the tears starting to his eyes at this unkind rebuff; and, turning away, he said in a weak and sorrowful voice,—

“My age renders my body of no use in battle, and my counsel is despised; but I leave my two sons and the vassals of Douglas in the field: may old Angus’s foreboding prove unfounded.”

The two armies were brought into a position very close to each other by a simultaneous movement they made towards Branxton Hill. Before the Scots descended from the slope of Flodden, they set fire to the relics of their camp, and then began to move under cover of the smoke; and till this blew away, neither army knew how near or how far the other one was. But, when this grey curtain, lifted by the wind, disclosed to each the enemy at only the distance of a

short quarter of a mile, it was clear that there must be a battle at once.

At four in the afternoon the cannon on both sides began to fire. The aim of the English gunners was truer than that of their Scottish foemen, who were driven from their posts by the accuracy and quickness of the shooting. With their long pikes the left wing of the Scottish army broke the part of the English lines opposed to them and repelled every attack of the English horse. But the broadswords of the Highlanders on the right wing failed to achieve a similar success. Then the centres met with a terrific shock; and a number of complicated movements took place, which resulted in King James and his men being so surrounded that all thought of escape was impossible. Nothing remained but to die fighting and to lie where the death-blow came. The great tragedy of the day was the death of gay and gallant James. Two arrows struck him, and the sweeping cut of a "brown bill," which somewhat resembled a scythe-blade on a pole, cleft his skull. Over his body, which lay within a spear's-length of Surrey, there was a terrible fight of Scottish and English knights; but the falling night enabled the beaten Scots to make good their retreat from the scene of so dreadful a disaster and defeat. Flodden was indeed a Field of Blood.

Let us now turn to a very different scene, which filled a French plain with the splendid equipments of two brilliant courts. Having sailed over to Calais, Henry VIII. of England met Francis I. of France in a field between Guines and Ardres in order to complete a treaty with that monarch. The English King took up his lodging in a great wooden house, which was covered on the outside with sail-cloth, painted like stone, and was hung within with richly embroidered tapestry, all glittering with jewels. An altar and many tables, heaped with gold and silver vessels and salvers, stood under the spacious roof of this building. Francis tried to raise a colossal tent, supported by the mast of a ship; but a strong wind broke the ropes and levelled the conical canvas to the ground, so that he had to go and live in an old castle at Ardres. There Wolsey, the great English Cardinal, visited him and concluded a treaty,

after which arrangements were made for the meeting of the Kings.

A tent, as splendid as such a place could possibly be made, having been pitched between their places of residence, they rode out one fine day in June to the place of meeting. Henry wore a dress, whose very name is gorgeousness itself. It was made of cloth of silver of damask, ribbed with cloth of gold; and his great train of nobles had spent far more than most of them could afford in order to make a splendid show in the eyes of the French courtiers. Slowly the magnificent horses paced along, nodding their heads from which towered tall plumes of coloured feathers, and picking their paces daintily, as if conscious of the important part, which they and their sweeping gilded trappings were playing in the kingly pageant. The Kings embraced each other on horseback in order to be on exactly equal terms of rank.

Said Francis, a model of manly beauty, whose sun-browned face, bright merry eyes, hooked nose, and full-red lips excited the admiration of all who saw him,—

“My dear brother and cousin, thus far to my pain have I travelled to see you personally. I think verily that you esteem me as I am, and that I am not unworthy to be your aid. The realms and seigniories in my possession demonstrate the extent of my power.”

In words equally formal and studied, bluff King Hal replied,—

“Neither your realms nor other the places of your power are a matter of my regard, but the steadfastness and loyal keeping of promises comprised in charters between you and me. I never saw prince with my eyes that might of my heart be more beloved; and for your love have I passed the seas into the furthest frontier of my kingdoms to see you.”

Then, dismounting, the two monarchs went arm-in-arm into the tent, as if they loved each other like the dearest friends, and there they sat down to a luxurious dinner, where the choicest dishes were served up, and washed down with cups of *hippocras*, a drink chiefly made of spiced and sweetened wine.

Some days afterwards the two Queens took their seats on thrones to see the tournaments, in which their royal hus-

bands shone conspicuous. We may fancy the splendour of our Queen Catharine's dress from the fact, that her very footstool was covered with a rich cloth, all sprinkled with pearls as the summer fields are thick with daisies. There were six days of this mock warfare, during which the Kings unhorsed and defeated all who opposed them. But we must not rashly believe that the Kings were therefore stronger men or better fighters than their opponents, for it was then considered a very right and delicate way of showing loyalty and flattering a King, to slip off at the moment of encounter and fall to the ground, as if the royal aim had been true and the royal lance irresistible. Two days were spent in attacking with levelled lances ; two in assaults with broadswords on horseback ; and two in fighting on foot. The evenings were devoted to balls and masquerades, in which the hawthorn and raspberry boughs, which were used to symbolize the two nations, were the favourite decorations. On the whole this grand interview lasted a fortnight, during which incalculable sums of money were spent on both sides. It did little good to any class of people in either nation except to the jewellers and tailors, who supplied the magnificent dresses and decorations, which entitled it to bear its gorgeous name—The Field of the Cloth of Gold.

## XVII.

## THE RISE AND FALL OF CARDINAL WOLSEY.

AFTER some years spent as a schoolmaster and clergyman at Oxford and elsewhere, the Rev. Thomas Wolsey worked himself into the favour of Henry VII. by showing an uncommon talent and promptitude in business of the State. One proof of his energy especially pleased Henry. The arrangements for a marriage contract, talked of between the King and a Continental Princess, required a man of clear head and ready tongue to go to Bruges in Flanders. Wolsey one Sunday evening was told to go. Next Thursday morning he entered the bed-room of the King, who began to speak to him very harshly for neglecting his commands, when Wolsey handed His Grace letters, proving past all question that he had been over the sea and back in this wonderfully short time.

Thus he pleased the father. The son, who was afterwards Henry VIII., was delighted in another way by the cunning priest, who danced and sang at the court revels and yet could be very grave and solemn, when he saw that the young King was in a mood for quiet reading or discussion. So he won his way step by step, until he was made English Legate by the Pope of Rome; and then he showed all the splendour of his tastes and the pride of his heart. His dress was of bright red, as was fitting for a great Cardinal to wear, and he caused his hat to be carried before him on a cushion, as he walked or rode on a mule in state through the streets.

The thing he wanted most was to be made Pope. And to gain this great object of his desire he tried to cultivate the friendship of the celebrated Charles V., Emperor of Germany. But he was disappointed twice in this ambitious effort. And not long after this disappointment things began to happen, which ended in his fall.

Henry VIII. got married the very year he ascended the throne to a Spanish Princess, who had formerly been the

wife of his brother. Her name was Catherine of Arragon, and she was the aunt of the Emperor Charles. And now at the end of eighteen years Henry wanted to separate from her and have a new wife called Anne Bullen: so he employed Wolsey to manage a divorce from Queen Catherine. The Pope was not willing to grant the divorce, and Henry was very impatient to have it.

There was a great trial in the hall of the Blackfriars' Monastery in London, where Wolsey and an Italian Cardinal took their seats to hear the case. Henry shouted *Here* in his big gruff voice, when his name was called; but Catherine refused to speak, when her name was pronounced. Instead of answering, she went over to the place where the King was sitting, and knelt down before him. And in that humble attitude she spoke for a long time, earnestly striving to melt her cruel husband's heart with her meek and pitiful words. When he gave no sign of sorrow or relenting, she rose up and walked proudly away out of the room and never came back to meet that court again. The Pope, by means of his Italian messenger to England, managed to put off a decision of the case, until Henry grew quite furious at the delay, of which he laid all the blame on Wolsey.

The King then dismissed this splendid and haughty priest from the court: and all the servants and officials, who had been in the habit of bowing low before the Lord Cardinal of York, when the sun was shining on him, now, when a dark cloud was gathering over his head, began to treat him with all kinds of disrespect. He was charged with having broken the English laws in exercising his power as Legate of the Roman Pontiff; and he was so lowered by his misfortunes and his fears, that he gave up to the King his grand house called York Palace with all its gorgeous furniture and its rich contents of gold and jewellery. Coming out of the lofty archway, he made his way to the river-side, rowed up to Putney, and then took horse for Esher, a house built of brick, which he owned near Hampton Court.

As he was riding slowly and sorrowfully in the direction of this place, he saw a horseman spurring quickly after him. This turned out to be one of the royal chamberlains, whom

Henry had, in a moment of pity, sent after him with some words of comfort and the present of a ring. Getting off his mule, Wolsey knelt down, took off his cap, and thanked God for this consolation. Then he gave this welcome messenger, as a token of his gratitude and joy, a little chain of gold with a crucifix attached.

"As for my King," said Wolsey, "I am sorry that I have no worthy token to send him. But stay, here is my fool, who rides beside me. Give him to His Majesty. I assure you, for any nobleman's pleasure, he is worth a thousand pounds."

The poor fool or jester did not at all relish this sudden and summary change of masters, for he really had come to love the Cardinal, whose constant companion he had been for a long time. He began to cry, refused to go with the King's messenger, and at last got so unruly and violent in his refusal, that it took six big footmen to seize him by the head and heels, and carry him off, howling and kicking, to the King.

At Esher Wolsey lived sadly for a while, signing himself "most wretched" in the letters he wrote from that place to the few men he still called his friends. Then he fell sick of a low fever, and was nearly dead, when Henry, relenting, sent his own doctor to visit him, and declared that he would rather lose twenty thousand pounds than have Wolsey die. Again the Cardinal caught at this hope of restoration to royal favour as eagerly as a drowning man catches at a rope. But the fit of pity passed, and Wolsey soon received an order to go away and live at York. Here arrangements were made for his enthronement in the cathedral,—a ceremony which should have been performed, when he was made Archbishop, but which had been always put off for other more engrossing calls of business or pleasure. Another call postponed the ceremony again, and this time for ever. He was seated at the dinner-table at Cawood Palace near York one day, when the noise of horse-hoofs clattered on the pavement of the court-yard, and the Earl of Northumberland, once a retainer of his own, walked into the room with a face of sorrow and confusion. Wolsey stood up, and with a smile held out a hand to welcome this old friend. The Earl



did not take the offered hand ; but with a voice broken with shame, said, as he laid a trembling hand on the Cardinal's shoulder, " My Lord, I arrest you for high treason." Wolsey stood like a statue for a while, and then broke out into loud cries and many tears. In a little while the southward journey of the condemned criminal and his guards began to be made slowly and mournfully. It was interrupted at Sheffield Park, where the Earl of Shrewsbury lived, by a severe attack of illness, which kept him a fortnight in bed, and left him so weak that he could scarcely sit on his mule, as the creature walked at its slowest pace. After crawling along for three days in extreme pain and weakness, he came at a late hour of the evening to the gateway of Leicester Abbey. As it had been dark for some time, the monks stood round with flaring torches in their hands to bid this great churchman welcome to their house. He had been growing weaker and more wretchedly ill every mile of that day's journey ; and now, as he dismounted with great difficulty from his cushioned saddle by the aid of the Abbot's friendly arm, he felt that the strength of life was gone from within him, and feebly said,—

" Father, I am come to lay my bones among you."

It was true. For a few days he lay in bed, swooning very often, and each time returning to consciousness with fainter breath and feebler pulse. When he felt the icy hand of Death coming very close, he sent a message to King Henry by the lips of Kingston, the lieutenant of the Tower, who had the chief charge of him as a prisoner. Among his last words were some, which have lived in history to warn us all, that earthly ambition is an empty and unsatisfying thing.

" Had I but served God as diligently as I have served the King, he would not have given me over in my grey hairs."

He was buried at midnight in a chapel of the Abbey : and news of his death reached Henry a little later, as he was shooting arrows at a target in the park of the very palace at Hampton, which he had taken as a present from the man, who was now lifeless. After a few words of commonplace sorrow, the King began to ask eager questions about a sum of money, which the Cardinal was supposed to have hidden in a secret place.

## XVIII.

## THE FIRES OF SMITHFIELD AND OXFORD.

Among the noble army of martyrs, who in the reign of Mary proved, by submitting to the tortures of the stake and the fagot, that they really desired to read the Bible and have a purer form of faith and worship than the old religion of the land, were four men, whose names may be taken to represent the rest. These were John Rogers, Canon of St. Paul's; Nicholas Ridley, Bishop of London; Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester; and Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Rogers was burned first. After lying in Newgate prison for a year or more, he was brought into the church of St. Mary in Southwark, and was there questioned and rebuked in a most uncharitable way. But he did not lose courage: and when, one February morning before it was light, the wife of his keeper came into his cell, and, shaking him by the shoulder, roused him from a deep sleep to tell him that he was to die by fire that very day, he replied to her with great calmness—

“Then I need not truss my points to-day;”

An answer amounting to very much the same as—

“I need scarcely take much trouble in dressing myself to-day.”

The “trussing of points” meant the tying of the numerous strings, which then joined the doublet and the hose together. He asked to be allowed to see his wife, but this was roughly refused, for the very fact of his having a wife was one of the things, for which he had been condemned to die. Then he was brought to Smithfield, and, as he went, he sang a hymn of supplication to God. Standing near the stake was his wife, in the centre of a group of the children he loved so well; but even this sight did not shake his resolve to die for the truth. He stepped boldly to the fire, and was burned alive.

Latimer and Ridley were burned together at Oxford. Their martyrdom presents one of the most striking pictures in the

English Reformation. Hugh Latimer learned Protestantism at Cambridge in the reign of Henry VIII., and preached it vigorously and with no stint of homely wit from the pulpit of a Wiltshire parish in his earlier days. His objections to the *hotch-potch* of Henry's religious opinions caused him to be cast into prison, where he lay a good while. But nothing could shake the solemn steadfastness of his religious opinions. And at the age of eighty he was brought out to die by one of the most dreadful of deaths. He was questioned in the Divinity School of Oxford about his belief as to the *Real Presence*—that is, whether he believed that, in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the bread and wine became really the flesh and blood of Jesus, according to the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation. "No," said the straightforward old man, "bread is bread and wine is wine."

One October morning the prison gates were opened, and Latimer and Ridley came out to be burned for what was called heresy. Old Latimer wore a coat of coarse threadbare cloth and had a nightcap on his head; Ridley, a younger and more punctilious man, was dressed in a black gown trimmed with fur, and a cape and bonnet made of velvet. Ridley spent his last minutes in giving to his friends as presents the things he had about him—bits of nutmeg and ginger, a little coin, and his watch. When Latimer threw aside his old garment of frieze, it was seen that he too had paid some attention to his dress, and had endeavoured to suit it to the occasion; for, the ragged old gown being cast off, there appeared below a winding-sheet, white and new, wrapping his meagre old body in its sad and snowy folds. When the martyrs were chained to the stakes, and the bundles of sticks were piled around and against them, some persons who wished to cut their sufferings as short as possible stepped forward and hung bags of gunpowder round their necks. Before the fire had actually begun to burn, Latimer spoke those heroic and faith-inspired words, which can never be written too often or too reverently,—

"Play the man, Master Ridley. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out."

The explosion of the powder killed Latimer; but poor

Ridley suffered the torture of feeling his legs burn, before the flames reached his body or the bag, whose explosion was intended to stun him and make him insensible to the pain.

Archbishop Cranmer was a weaker and more timid man than these. It was so arranged that, on looking out of the window of his prison, he saw the thick clouds of smoke rolling up from the place, where Ridley was burning. By this and certain persuasions he was induced to sign six distinct papers condemning Protestantism. But this did not save him from being carried out to die. It was very wet on that March morning long ago,—so wet that the preacher of Cranmer's execution-discourse was obliged to speak under the shelter of a church roof. Everybody thought that he would now adhere to the opinions expressed in his six papers of submission. But, no! he declared, to the surprise and alarm of the Roman Catholics, that he had written these things "under fear of death to save his life," and that he utterly renounced the Pope as Antichrist, and held all his doctrines to be false. They stopped him in his speech, and brought him quickly to the place of death. And there, while the flames were curling up, he held out the hand that had signed the submissions, and burned it away of his own accord, crying out as he did so, "That unworthy hand." There is a story to the effect that his heart was found among the ashes uninjured by the flames.

## XIX.

## THE SAD END OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

AFTER a career of tragic adventures and extraordinary changes, which surpassed in romantic interest almost anything, that story-tellers have invented in novels, Mary, Queen of Scots, went on board a little fishing-boat and was carried across the Solway Frith to the English shore. Her calm bright days of childhood, spent in the seclusion of a French nunnery—her short glittering time at the French court—her landing at Leith amid great rejoicings—her marriage with Darnley—the dreadful scene in the turret of Holyrood, where Signior Davie, her favourite musician, fell pierced with many blades, darkening all the oaken floor with his purple blood—the mysterious explosion at Kirk o' Field, which had some unexplained connection with the dead body of Darnley, found next morning in the garden—the surrender at Carberry, and the weary days and nights in the prison-island of Lochleven—the rout at Langside—had all come and gone like the changes of a distempered dream, crowded into the narrow space of twenty-six years. She now cast herself on the mercy of a woman, whose jealousy she had roused wilfully by her claim upon the English crown, and, in a way she could not help, by her remarkable beauty.

From the fishing village on the coast of Cumberland, where she had landed, Mary was brought to the castle of Carlisle, and was kept there in safe custody, until it was thought better to remove her to Bolton in Yorkshire, a strong walled fortress with only one gate. While she lay here, a meeting of Commissioners took place at York, which in fact amounted to her trial for being an accomplice of Bothwell in Darnley's murder, of which he was accused. Her great opponent, the Regent Murray, brought forward in the course of this investigation a silver box, containing a number of her private letters and little pieces of poetry, with which he tried to establish her guilt. The result of the whole thing was, that

the unhappy Queen of Scotland passed from Bolton Castle to another stronghold at Tutbury on the Dove in Staffordshire. One of the greatest noblemen in England, the Duke of Norfolk, wanted to marry her, and would have done so in spite of Elizabeth's determined opposition, only that the stern and masculine woman, who wore the English crown, first locked him into the Tower and then cut off his head, which effectually cured him of all matrimonial intentions. After this gleam of hope, so speedily extinguished, the history of the Scottish Queen became merely the record of changing jails and jailers, with the indistinct noise of plots and secret correspondence. At last, when nearly twenty years of Mary's life had gone by in English dungeons, withering her beauty and breaking her health, there came a plot, a trial, and an execution, which formed the three last sad scenes in the tragedy of her guilty life.

The plot was formed principally by a Roman Catholic priest and a young English gentleman of the same persuasion, named Antony Babington. It had for its object the murder of Queen Elizabeth, and the liberation of Queen Mary from the prisons, in which she had grown grey. Some letters were written to the Scottish Queen by Babington, and were carried to the castle, where she lay, by a man who went there regularly with beer for the household. But this brewer yielded to the bribes of a spy, and gave Elizabeth's minister Walsingham an opportunity of reading all the correspondence between the captive Queen and those who wanted to set her free. When the fit time came, all the conspirators were arrested and hanged, while preparations were made for the trial of Queen Mary by a number of special Commissioners.

The trial took place in the great hall of Fotheringay Castle in Northamptonshire. An empty chair, with a magnificent canopy hanging over it, was placed at the upper end of the hall to represent the absent Queen of England, and before it in a chair without a canopy, sat Mary, alone and unfriended. Bad as she had been, we can scarcely help feeling pity for her in these last hours of her life, when she stood like a deer at bay, in the circle of her foes. When the serjeant had told the whole story of the plot, for a connection

with which she was brought now to her trial, *copies* of some letters, which had passed between her and Babington, were brought forward to prove that she had encouraged both the invasion of England and the assassination of Elizabeth. Only once did her firmness give way during the reading of the letters, and that was when the name of Arundel, Norfolk's son, was mentioned. At its sound she burst into tears; for the father had died on the scaffold, and the son had been locked in the Tower, where he afterwards died, for her sake. But, when it came to her turn to answer these accusations, she said "that she would never make shipwreck of her soul by engaging in such a bloody crime as the murder of Elizabeth." There were no witnesses brought forward to prove, that these copied letters were taken from real originals. She was allowed no defender but her own voice. After some time, the proceedings at Fotheringay closed; and the Commissioners met on a December day in the Star Chamber at Westminster, where the secretaries, who had written the letters, were brought out to swear that they were true, and not forgeries. Then it was decided that the poor Scottish Queen was to die.

A couple of months later the Earl-Marshal of England arrived at Fotheringay with the death-warrant of the captive Queen. The following morning at eight was appointed for the execution. That night at supper Mary called her servants round her, and, as they knelt weeping over cups of wine, she drank a last remembrance to them and bade them farewell. The hours of darkness went by in alternate sleep and prayer, and at dawn she rose. After reading her will to her attendants, she made them presents of all the clothes she had except the black satin gown and veil of lawn, in which she was dressed. Having spent some time in prayer, she took an ivory crucifix in her hand and went, at the summons of the Sheriff, into the hall. On her way she met her steward, Sir Robert Melville, an old man, and one who had been very true to her cause. He fell upon his knees and cried like a child at the thought of having to bring back to Scotland the sad news of her death. But she told him rather to be glad, for her troubles were now all coming to an end. At first the Lords, to whom the painful task of seeing her

die had been intrusted, refused to allow any of her servants to stand by the scaffold, "lest," said rough Kent, "they may be dipping handkerchiefs in your Grace's blood." But at last they consented that a few should attend her in her last moments. Three feet above the floor a black scaffold was raised, and on it, also draped in black, were a stool, a cushion, and a block. Beside her, as she sat upon the stool, rose the dark figure of a headsman from the Tower, dressed in black velvet, in contrast with which the blade of the axe shone with a dreadfully distinct brightness. The death-warrant was read, and the Dean of Peterborough began to preach a long sermon, but the doomed Queen would not listen to his loud address. Her neck was bared, and a kerchief with a golden fringe was bound upon her eyes. Then, kneeling on the cushion, she bent her neck across the block and spoke some pious words. Unnerved by his feelings, the headsman, whose bloody trade had not quite hardened his heart, had to chop three times at the fair and slender neck, before the head, whose beauty had excited so much admiration and caused so much mischief, dropped with red smears upon the black cloth of the platform. The little lap-dog, of which she had made a pet and companion, was nestling under the folds of her dress even then, and crept afterwards into the space between the body and the severed head.



## XX.

## THE SPANISH ARMADA.

ONE evening in July a number of captains and distinguished naval officers were playing a game at bowls on the green sward of what is called the Hoe at Plymouth in the south of England, when away on the edge of the sea was seen the white speck of a sail. It came nearer, and soon distinctly took the shape of a little barque, that pressed on under every rag of canvas she could show towards the harbour of Plymouth. More than once the players in the pauses of the game exchanged remarks and guesses about the approaching sail, for they were gathered there on the watch for a gigantic Spanish fleet, which the boastful Philip had called in his pride *The Invincible Armada*. When the ship reached land, her master hurried up to the Hoe, and, breathless with his haste, told the officers that he had seen the great ship-castles of the Spaniards only that morning—that he had been chased by one of them—but that his little cutter by her quick sailing had outraced the larger foreign ship. At once some of the captains were going to hurry off and heave up their anchors; but Drake, whose fame is great as a sailor and discoverer, insisted that the game of bowls should be finished. "For," he said, "we have plenty of time to finish our match and beat the Spaniards too." And so the game was played out, and in due time the Spaniards were flying homeward past Aberdeen and Cape Wrath.

In spite of the wind that blew, the English fleet sailed out of harbour that night; and next day the men on the masts saw the first signs of the Spanish Armada. The ships lay in a great half-moon of wooden castles for fully seven miles along the sea. There were vessels of different kinds and sizes. There was the great *galleon*, with oaken ribs as thick as a wall, and masts twined with pitched cables, as closely as the handle of a cricket-bat is bound with waxed cord. There was the *gallias*, a vessel like the old Roman

galley, in which slaves rowed large heavy oars in banks or tiers, one above another. And there were many smaller ships and boats to fill the intervals in the great half-moon. The English Admiral, a brave Roman Catholic nobleman, Lord Howard of Effingham, looked carefully at the huge ships, and let them sail slowly past his lighter and nimbler vessels. Then, when they had gone some distance on the way to Calais, the English guns opened fire on the stragglers at the rear. In this first exchange of shots the English had the best of the fighting, for the Spanish cannon were so fixed on the lofty decks that their muzzles could not be depressed, and the balls were sent flying far above the English ships. Another advantage, which the English had, resulted from the lightness of their hulls, which were easily moved and could sail round the big galleons of Spain. The two fleets went up the English Channel towards the Straits of Dover, the Spaniards first, the English following and fighting as long as their supply of powder lasted. So slow was the rate of progress, that it took a whole week to reach Calais; and Dunkirk, where the Prince of Parma lay with an army ready for the invasion of England, was somewhat farther on. It was decreed that Parma's soldiers should never embark in the Spanish ships, which now lay so very near them. For one night a few daring Englishmen crept quietly into eight small ships, which had been previously filled with things that burned long and fiercely, such as pitch and resin, and, gliding in among the tall dark masses, which slept upon the sea near Calais with no sign of life except the little lights twinkling high upon the masts like solitary scattered stars, set the eight in a blaze close to the Spanish hulls. The Spaniards had been scorched before by a similar stratagem; and, when the dreadful cry, "The fire of Antwerp," more dreadful on account of the darkness of the night and the dim terrors of an unknown sea, rose upon the air, there was great confusion among the Spanish vessels. Ships ran violently against each other in the effort to escape from the neighbourhood of the flaming barges. Often the explosion of some cunningly prepared grenade or other firework in the burning ships lighted a wide circle of the dark-heaving sea with a sudden brightness and a sudden crash, which made

the succeeding darkness and silence more terrible. Next morning the Spanish ships were all scattered in different directions owing to this panic; and the English sailors, attacking them in small and helpless knots, easily destroyed or defeated the fragments of the fleet, which, in its union and massive strength, seemed really invincible. It reminds us of that old story of the arrows, which, being tied in a bundle together, defied all the efforts of a strong man to break them, but which snapped easily under a slight pressure of his fingers, when the string was cut and he took them one by one.

Those ships of the Spanish fleet, which escaped, made their way northward, followed to Flamborough Head by the pursuing English. Away past St. Abb's Head, rounding the shoulder of Aberdeenshire, fled the ill-fated galleons with their smaller attendants, and stretched right across the Moray Frith to that channel, which first admits a passage into the wide Atlantic from the German Ocean. There is on that columned edge of sea, where the Giant's Causeway juts out from the northern coast of Ireland, a tall pillar of rock, that bears a name in which the word *Spain* is clearly heard. The legend of the place is, that some Spanish ships, approaching the shore in a fog, thought this rock the turret of a fortified castle, and fired a broadside at it as they passed. So, past the west coast of Ireland and across the Bay of Biscay they went—those fifty-three broken ships, manned with a small number of pale and ragged men, who had but little food and less appetite to eat it. And thus ended the expedition, by means of which King Philip II. of Spain intended to conquer England, and inflict upon Protestantism a blow, from which it was never to recover.

## XXI.

## THE DEATH-BED OF QUEEN BESS.

A STORY is told about Queen Elizabeth and her last favourite but one—the hot-headed young Earl of Essex—which, although in all likelihood a romantic invention, may be given here, as it finds a place in many books of English history. It is said that the Queen, at a time of great friendship and good will towards this dashing young soldier, gave him as a keepsake a ring, telling him to send it to her, if he ever found himself in any danger or distress, and that she would give him safety or help. He wore it for a good while, before any need to use it arose; but at length, after trying to raise a rebellion in London against the very Queen, who had bestowed the gift, he found himself in prison and in exceeding great danger of losing his head by the axe of the public executioner. He then thought of the ring; and one day gave it to a lady, the Countess of Nottingham, with the request that she would carry it to the Queen with as little delay as possible. The Countess had a husband, who hated Essex, and would gladly have him put out of the way; and she yielded to the commands of that husband, who insisted that she should not give the ring to the Queen. Bitterly angry at what she considered the pride of the imprisoned Earl, Elizabeth gave orders for his death, and his head was taken off within the walls of the Tower.

She seems never to have fully recovered from the shock of his death. And we are told that there came to her one day from this Countess of Nottingham, who was then lying at the point of death, a message, earnestly desiring a visit from Her Grace the Queen. Elizabeth went; and, when the poor dying woman gasped out with faint utterance her confession of the fraud, which had been practised with regard to the ring, the Queen rose like a mad woman, and, seizing the feeble sufferer by the arm, shook her with clenched teeth and blazing eyes.

By-and-by Elizabeth began to show distinct signs of failing health, and hardly ever went out of the palace. She slept very little, and took scarcely any food; and her mouth and throat were so hot, that she was obliged to sip cooling liquids almost constantly. Some idle words of pretended prophecy, to the effect that she was to die in a certain bed, so weighed upon her mind, that she refused to go to bed at all. And then she lay on cushions piled upon the floor, with her finger always in her mouth like a little child, and her eyes staring gloomily on the ground—a very pitiable wreck of that strong-minded woman, who had made a gallant speech to her troops at Tilbury Fort, and who had played the chief part in so many brilliant revels at Kenilworth and elsewhere. By-and-by her attendants lifted her by force into bed, where she lay, apparently listening to the Bishops, who crowded into her chamber for the purpose of giving her some spiritual advice and consolation in her last hour. Some of the Ministers of State came in to ask about the succession, upon which the daughter of old Harry Tudor spoke sharply out,—

“My seat has been the seat of Kings—I will have no *rascal* to succeed me.”

And, when the Lords pressed her for an explanation of her meaning, she declared that it was to her cousin of Scotland she referred as the fit person to succeed her. The last action her trembling and palsied hands performed, after her tongue had lost the power of uttering a word, was to make a motion above her head, as if she was pointing to a crown. Then, sinking into a sleep which ended in a stupor, she passed away from life so quietly that hardly any one could perceive the moment of her death.

## PART THIRD.

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### I.

#### THE GUNPOWDER TREASON.

THE reign of James the First had not been many months in progress, when it became evident to the Roman Catholics, that he had not the smallest intention of conferring any favour on them, or relaxing those laws, which pressed on them with painful severity. Some of the more desperate men of that creed began to brood over this and think of revenge; and to one of them, named Robert Catesby, a dreadful thought occurred, which might have resulted in a crime so terrible that our history has nothing similar in all its pages. His plan was to put a quantity of gunpowder under the flooring of the House of Lords; and, when the King was there with all the Peers of the land, to blow up the entire assembly. He first told his scheme to an old acquaintance, named Winter, who had been in the army; and Winter chose, as a third accomplice, Guy or Guido Fawkes, a man who had seen life in many wild forms, and who had a courage that could not be shaken. Guy Fawkes has by general consent come to be looked upon as the great villain of the gang; and, on every returning anniversary of the discovery, his image, made of straw and decked with old clothes, is burned by English street-boys in nearly every town. With his fiercely twirled moustache and the dark shadow of his broad-leafed hat hanging over his knitted brows, he certainly looked like a man capable of any deed however desperate. Two more men joined the original three, before the intended crime was revealed in all its terror. Having come together in a dark and lonely house, which stood by itself in the fields near London, they knelt down and swore by the Trinity and the

Sacrament, that they would never tell the secret they were about to hear, or flinch in any way from taking their part in the deeds that were to be done. Then Catesby told them about the powder and his plan, after which they went up stairs and took the Sacrament from the hands of a priest, who is said not to have known what they proposed to do.

One of them then rented a house at Westminster, pretending that he did so to be near the court, where he held a situation. The real reason, why this house was chosen, lay in the fact that its back wall leaned against that of the Parliament House, so that the conspirators could quietly break a hole through and get without notice into the cellars below the House. On the other side of the Thames at Lambeth they had another house, in which they secretly stored wood and gunpowder, until it was time to carry them across. The Scotch Commissioners were put to lodge in their house at Westminster, which prevented them from doing any work for a long time. But, when winter came, they prepared for long and earnest labour. In order to prevent any suspicion arising from some of their number going out to buy food, they laid in a stock of such things as would keep—hard eggs, dried meat, and pasties—and on these they resolved to live. They had also plenty of powder and ball, so that, if discovered, they might be able to fight to the last. Steadily and silently they went to work with crowbars and pickaxes in the dim lighted cellar, while Guy Fawkes kept watch, to see if any one approached the house; and, when his signal was heard, they all stopped work, until it was safe to begin again. The postponement, or as it is called, prorogation of Parliament, caused them to give up digging for a while, and, when they began again, it was with anxious and superstitious hearts. One fancy especially troubled them. They thought that they heard the noise of a large bell, booming away deep in the earth; and, until some holy water, as Roman Catholics call water blessed by a priest, was sprinkled on the rubbish they were digging out, they had not courage to resume their work. The noise seemed to them to stop at the sprinkling of the water. A real noise also frightened them a good deal, when there sounded overhead a rumbling and a noise of feet. They grew pale, for they had dug like moles away in under

the cellars of the House of Parliament, and of course they thought, that this was the noise of men coming to arrest or kill them. They heard the steps of Fawkes soon hurrying down to the place, in which they were working, and, when they saw his grim face shining with a smile, they knew they had no reason to be afraid. It turned out that a dealer in coals, who had occupied the cellar right under the House, was selling off his stock for the purpose of removing to another place. As soon as it could be done without exciting suspicion, the cellar was taken, and the hole, they had been cutting, was left as it lay. To carry over the river thirty-six barrels of gunpowder was the next step, and it was successfully accomplished, the casks being hidden under bundles of sticks and logs of wood. When the time of crime was nearly come, a tall man in a cloak knocked at the door of Lord Mounteagle's house, and, handing in a letter, went quickly away in the darkness. The letter was full of mysterious words, advising Mounteagle to stay away from Parliament. He laid it before the Ministry, and some one guessed from its language, that gunpowder was meant by the words "terrible blow." Waiting until the very night before the day, on which the Parliament was to meet, they then sent soldiers to seize any one found in the cellar below the House. Fawkes came up to see, if there was any sign of danger, and, just as he put his head out of the door, he was caught, tied with cords, and carried away to the King. When they searched him, they found a watch, some tinder, and matches; and in the cellar they found a lighted lantern. His courage never failed: although they put him to very dreadful torture, he would tell nothing but what they knew already. This arrest destroyed all the hopes of the conspirators, the most daring among whom hurried away to a house in the country, where they stood a siege. During their resistance, as a quantity of gunpowder was drying at a fire, it exploded and burned some of them dreadfully—a thing which was a remarkable punishment on men, who had intended to commit a great crime with the very substance that now scorched themselves. Some of them were shot there; but most of them were executed with dreadful and bloody tortures in St. Paul's Churchyard.



## II.

## THE ADVENTURES OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

THERE is no name in English history, which appears in so many various scenes as the name of Raleigh. He was born in Devonshire, and educated at Oxford. After fighting as a soldier in both France and the Netherlands, he entered upon the career of a sailor and colonizer in company with his half-brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert. But a lucky meeting with Queen Elizabeth on a muddy road, over which he spread his rich cloak, that she might not soil her dainty feet, changed his life for a time from the rough deck to the brilliant banquet-rooms of the English court. Sir Humphrey went down in an Atlantic storm with all on board his ship, the *Squirrel*; and Raleigh, having received a grant of land, sent out an expedition, by which the colony of Virginia was founded. Three plants—tobacco, maize, and the potato—were introduced into Europe by the explorers of this distant place. We find Raleigh also in Ireland, visiting the poet Spenser, and cultivating the acres, which he had received in the conquered province of Munster. But he did not stay there, for there was great work to be done at home. The Armada was about to sail, and men like him could not be spared. And, when it came into the English Channel, he had a glorious share in the operations, which ended in its total defeat. He fell in love with one of Elizabeth's maids of honour, and was put in prison by the jealous Queen. There, and in his quiet country-house among the trees of Sherborne in Dorsetshire, to which he retired after his release from confinement and his marriage, he planned a voyage to the Orinoco, where he expected to find gold and diamonds in great abundance. This voyage he actually made soon after, but, being restored to favour at court, he did not carry out his ideas of colonizing Guiana, but spent his time in wearing magnificent dresses, and attending the splendid pageants, for which the time was celebrated. But he was

not a mere courtier, for he served in the fleet at the taking of Cadiz, and was wounded in the leg.

When Elizabeth died, the misfortunes of Raleigh began to increase and grow very black. Disliking King James, he was accused of setting on foot a plot to dethrone the Scotsman, who was no favourite with his new people. And he was brought to trial at Winchester, and after condemnation was sent to prison.

This confinement of thirteen years in the Tower proved to be the period of his life, which produced his greatest fame. For he began in his gloomy cell to write a book called the *History of the World*, and with the aid of friends he carried it on to a considerable length. But he did not lose the hope of getting out of prison, and at a favourable time he sent a friend to tell a courtier about a gold mine in Guiana, which he had discovered during his voyage. This courtier told the King, who set Raleigh free upon the understanding that he was to have the great bulk of what was found. With thirteen ships, Raleigh set sail for Trinidad; and, when he reached the Orinoco, being sick himself, he sent his son and a captain, whom he trusted, up the stream to attack the town of St. Thomas. In the fight that ensued, young Raleigh was killed; and the poor captain, after he came back to tell the sad story to Raleigh, and to receive dreadful reproaches in return for his devotion, went into his cabin, fired a pistol into his breast, and, finding that only a rib was broken by the shot, stabbed himself to the heart. Raleigh then led his fleet, which was greatly lessened in number by desertions, away to Newfoundland in the hope of finding some of the Spanish silver-ships to plunder. But this hope also failed, and he steered his vessels away to England.

At the urgent demand of the Spanish Ambassador he was arrested, as soon as he landed, and taken again to that Tower, where he had spent many weary years. The old sentence, pronounced against him so long before, was now brought forward, and by it he was condemned to die. When the morning of execution came, he took a good breakfast, smoked a pipe, and drank a cup of the wine called sack. So great was the crowd round the scaffold that it was with

difficulty he could be forced through to the place where he was to die. He then made a speech, in the course of which he declared that it was a false accusation, which charged him with sitting in a window opposite to the scaffold on which Essex died, puffing out smoke in derision. He swore solemnly that he had had no hand in the blood of the Earl.

The Sheriff wanted him to come down and warm himself at a fire, as he seemed to be cold.

"No, good Mr. Sheriff," said he, "let us be quick, for in a quarter of an hour my ague will come on me, and, if I be not dead before then, my enemies will say that I quake for fear."

Then, having prayed and bidden farewell to the gentlemen around him, he took up the axe, and balanced it in his hand, saying at the same time, as he ran his fingers along the edge,—

"This is a sharp medicine; but it will cure all diseases." When his neck was placed upon the block, the headsman delayed to give the blow, upon which he cried out,—

"What are you afraid of? Strike, man!"

The words were scarcely uttered, when the blow fell; and another, following, sent the head of brave old Raleigh rolling in the sawdust.

## III.

## THE VOYAGE OF THE MAYFLOWER.

IN the reign of James I., when persecution was raging against the Puritans, some pious farmers left the Humber to find shelter in Holland. Settling at Leyden, they began to work for their bread at different trades, one becoming a printer, another a dyer of silk ; and all behaved with such perfect quietness and honesty, as to win the good opinion of the magistrates. But they still felt like exiles, and longed for a home. And at last they resolved to go to America. When they had got the consent of the Virginian Company, and had arranged with some London merchants about the raising of money to carry on the fisheries in those distant seas, they prepared two ships for the voyage. These, bearing the names of two pretty English flowers—the *Mayflower* and the *Speedwell*—were intended to carry the white blossom of a pure religious faith across the Atlantic, and plant it on the American shore.

At Delft-Haven the Pilgrim Fathers embarked upon their perilous voyage. They had fasted and prayed, had sung psalms, and shed many natural tears at a farewell feast given in their pastor's house ; and now the ropes were loosed, and, with the firing of their three little cannon and all the muskets they possessed, the faithful band sailed out of the harbour. After leaving Southampton, where they called, the smaller ship, the *Speedwell*, began to leak, and finally at Plymouth gave up the voyage. Then the *Mayflower* sailed alone, with a hundred persons on board—grave men, mothers, children, and even babies—and for sixty-three days was tossed on the waves of the Atlantic, until the crew found themselves under the shelter of Cape Cod. One of their number had died during the voyage.

In the cabin of their weather-beaten ship the forty-one men on board signed a paper, binding themselves to obey and submit to all laws and rules, that seemed to be for the benefit

of the colony. And then they began to think of landing. It was almost winter, and some of them had to wade ashore through the freezing shallows. Then they found their shallop or boat to be so frail, that it took seventeen days to make it water-tight. Through snow and wind a hardy band of them rowed ashore, and, as they pulled through the dark waves, the spray dashed upon their coats, and, being frozen in a moment, made the cloth as stiff as iron.

Their first exploring trip was very miserable. The men were tired almost to death, plodding over snowy hills and wading through icy rivers; and, except a little heap of maize, they found nothing but the graves of Indians.

When they renewed their search for a good harbour, one morning just after prayers, which they never forgot or delayed, a wild war-whoop was heard and a shower of arrows came whizzing in among them. Then they took to their boat again, and were almost wrecked. Their rudder broke, and they had to steer with oars. Then the mast came in three pieces, and the sail fell overboard. But, just as they were in despair, the tide drove the boat through the surf, and they found themselves safe in a harbour. It was not long before the *Mayflower* came to anchor in this place of refuge, which they named Plymouth Bay, in grateful recognition of the kindness shown to them in the last English seaport, at which they had called.

The toil of building wooden houses made many of the men worse in health; and diseases of the lungs struck several of them down. John Carver, who had been appointed Governor before they left the cabin of the ship, soon sank and died; and Bradford succeeded to his post. At last the warm winds began to blow, and the birds of spring to sing, which revived hope in their hearts; but even the sweet summer—and it is a very fair season there—was saddened with graves. In the autumn came some new emigrants, who brought no food with them; and so through all the next winter there was scarcely half enough for the colonists. Fishermen gave them a little help, and some ships sold them provisions at a high rate. At one time they had only a *pint* of Indian corn, being an allowance of just three *kernels* a-piece; and a lobster and a cup of water formed the material of their feasts.

Of beef they had not a slice for four years after their landing. Yet amid all their privations and sorrows, that faith in God, which had carried them across the ocean, remained unshaken.

The best scholar and soldier of the band was Miles Standish, who directed the defence of their little fortress. For a long time after the shower of arrows, already mentioned, they saw nothing of the Indians, except the smoke from some distant wigwams, and perhaps a few dark figures moving along the horizon. One day a red man, with a cap of coloured feathers and a dress of deerskin, came into the camp and said, "Welcome Englishmen," telling them that they were quite free to keep the land they had settled on, because the Indian tribe, which had formerly owned it, had been swept away by a pestilence. Then a treaty was made with the Indians, and a trade in furs began. At first one of the chiefs had intentions of war, and sent, as a sign of his defiance, a bundle of arrows rolled in the skin of a rattlesnake; but the red man grew very peaceful and friendly, when Governor Bradford stuffed the skin with gunpowder and bullets, and sent it back to him, as a slight hint of the reception he might expect, if he went to war.

In spite of all that foes, famine, and fever could do, the colony lived and prospered, though at first somewhat slowly; and by-and-by the little plantation, formed by the Pilgrims of the *Mayflower*, grew into a great State.

## IV.

## HOW A KING OF ENGLAND LOST HIS HEAD.

THE son of that King, who was nearly blown up by the Gunpowder Plot, married, when he had himself become a King, a black-eyed Princess of France, who was a Roman Catholic and a great lover of her own way. King Charles I., influenced by her and some ministers of state and religion, began almost at once to act like a tyrant, especially in the matter of levying taxes, which he persisted in doing without the consent of Parliament. About this the Parliament and he had many contests; and every year the feeling between them grew worse and worse. There was a tax, called Ship-money, which was felt to be so unjust a burden that a gentleman named John Hampden refused to pay it, and was brought before the judges for refusing. Although he lost the case, the people came to love him all the more for his resistance to tyranny. And many men, of whom the principal were John Pym and Oliver Cromwell, joined him in striving to baffle the attempts of the King and his two chief ministers to destroy the liberty of the English people. The two royal ministers, who were the Earl of Strafford and Archbishop Laud, were accused and soon executed. And then a war began between King Charles I. and his Parliament.

This war lasted three years—the great battles being those of Marston Moor and Naseby. And it ended in the flight of Charles, who rode away out of Oxford in the dusk of an April morning, and gave himself up to the Scotch, then in a camp upon the river Trent. By the Scotch after a while he was handed over to the Presbyterians, who represented the milder party of the English Parliament, and who certainly had no intention of putting him to death. The King was then confined in various castles, while the Presbyterians and Independents struggled hard to see, which should be the uppermost party in Parliament and in the disposal of the King. In this contest the Independents were victorious,

because they consisted of the chief army men, among whom a Huntingdon farmer, named Oliver Cromwell, was certainly the greatest. This man, who had drilled a famous regiment, called from their valour Ironsides, had been the chief means of winning for the Parliament the battle of Marston, and had been raised to high position in the army. Stern and resolute, Oliver took a step, which removed all his enemies from the House of Commons, when he placed dragoons and pikemen at the door and arrested every Presbyterian who tried to go in. When this had been done, all the Independent members resolved to bring the King out of prison and try him publicly for going to war with his own people.

Calling themselves the High Court of Justice, they desired the drums and trumpets to sound, and the heralds to proclaim the trial that was about to be held. And with a hammer they broke the Great Seal of England, on which the figure of the King was engraved. Being brought up from Windsor, Charles was put in a sedan-chair and carried into Westminster Hall, where the judges sat dressed in black. Before the gallery, on which their steeple hats rose in slanting rows, stood a table with the mace and sword displayed. The King came in with his hat on, and, sitting down in a velvet chair, stared darkly and proudly at them. And then the trial began. When a celebrated lawyer rose to state the charge, Charles called out, "Hold," and gave him a sharp tap on the shoulder with a gold-headed cane he carried. At that moment the gold knob dropped off, and a quick eye might have seen the King grow pale for an instant, as the thought crossed his brain, that this was a bad omen. But he soon recovered, and broke into a laugh, when he heard the reading of the accusation. It was usual for him to stammer in speaking, but now under the excitement of so strange a scene he spoke in a clear and flowing voice, objecting to the authority of the Court and especially complaining of the absence of the Peers of England. For seven days this work went on; and then, when the King entered the place of trial, he saw at a single glance that all the members in the gallery were dressed in *red*. On that day he received sentence of death.

Rising two hours before dawn on the appointed day, the



King put on an extra shirt, because it was cold; and, after taking particular pains with his dress, called in Bishop Juxon to pray with him. They remained in private for an hour, after which an officer knocked at the door, and with a pale face and trembling voice came in to say that it was time to go to the scaffold. They walked from St. James's Palace through the Park to Whitehall past a number of soldiers, who were beating drums and had their colours flying. The King walked very quickly on with head erect, and after him came first a band of guards armed with halberds, and then a crowd of his own attendants with their heads uncovered and their faces full of grief. Deep silence, broken only by a muttered prayer, prevailed, as he passed and entered into Whitehall. The scaffold not being quite ready, he went with his faithful friend the Bishop into a small private room, where he had often played with his little Charles and his little James, and stayed there, praying. After he had drunk a glass of claret and eaten a morsel of bread, the same pale Colonel, who had called him in the morning, again tapped at the door. The King was led out to the front of the Banqueting House, where there was a railed scaffold hung with black. All round this dreadful platform there were horsemen with drawn swords and infantry with shouldered pikes, and beyond the line of these there was a perfect sea of faces, all pale with anxiety, many wet with tears. Prayers broke out from the crowd every minute, and the soldiers did not forbid the people to express the deep feelings of their hearts. Charles made a speech, declaring that the war was not his fault; and then, noticing a gentleman, who was touching the edge of the axe, he cried out—

“Hurt not the axe; that may hurt me.”

This caution was repeated to another, who went near it.

“Take heed of the axe, take heed of the axe.”

There were standing by two men in masks and disguises, for the public executioner is always obliged to screen himself in this way from the knowledge of the people; and Charles said to one of them,—

“I shall say but very short prayers, and then thrust out my hands for the signal.”

Calling for his night-cap, he put it on, and gathered under it those flowing curls, which were worn by the Cavalier gentlemen, of England at that time. And then occurred his last memorable conversation, held with Bishop Juxon.

"I have a good cause and a gracious God on my side," said the King.

"Yes," said the Bishop, "there is but one stage more; it is turbulent and troublesome, but very short: it will soon carry you a great way, even from earth to heaven."

"I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where there can be no disturbance," rejoined the King.

"Yes, it is a good exchange," said Juxon.

The last moment was now come. Charles took off his cloak, handed the jewelled star, which he wore in honour of St. George, to the prelate, and knelt down beside the block. When he stretched out his hands the next minute, the axe came strongly down, and cut through the neck at a single stroke. The attendant headsman took the head up by the hair and cried out,—

"This is the head of a traitor!"

There was a deep groan from every person in the crowd, that filled the ancient street.

## V.

## THE ESCAPE OF CHARLES II. FROM WORCESTER.

WHEN Charles II. saw that the battle of Worcester was completely lost, he rode away with a few gentlemen in the hope that he might get to London, before the news of his defeat reached the capital. So he went on in the dark by quiet ways for twenty miles, until he reached a place called White Ladies, where he got a little bread and cheese. There he changed his dress with the intention of going on foot to London, putting on an old green jacket, so threadbare as to be white in many places, a leathern doublet, and a greasy old grey hat to cover his close-cropped head. In this costume he went with a farmer to hide in a wood called Spring Coppice, where he lay all next day in a very heavy rain. Then he formed the design of trying to cross the Severn into Wales.

As he and a cutter of wood went in the dark towards the river, they got a great fright from a miller, whom they saw in white clothes sitting at his door, and, who, when they would not stand, chased them, crying "Rogues." The King did not cross the river Severn, owing to the ford being guarded; and, after hiding in a barn for a time, he made his way back to the wood of Boscobel—a wretched-looking figure, creeping along with old shoes, which made his feet so sore, that he was obliged to put bits of paper between his toes to ease the smart.

Coming upon a Colonel Careless in the wood, the King got with him up into a leafy oak-tree, and, a cushion being placed between the forking branches, lay down with his head on the Colonel's knee to snatch a little sleep. It was well the leaves were thick, for the two fugitives saw the soldiers, who were searching for them through the wood. The King and the Colonel were also associated in the cooking of some mutton in a parlour, about which they had many a joke afterwards. In his impatience Charles called for a

frying-pan, when the flesh was scarcely cold, and, cutting chops, put some butter in the pan and set to work as a cook, while the Colonel turned the meat.

Soon after this, having left Boscobel, Charles put on the grey dress of a farmer's son, casting off the old green coat and exchanging his name Will Jones for the name Will Jackson. Then, mounted on a horse, he took up the wife of Colonel Lane on a pillion behind him, as the custom was, and rode with her towards Bristol. On the way they stopped at various houses, where the King, pretending to be sick with the ague, went away to bed at once and had his food carried in to him. Day by day Lord Wilmot, a faithful friend, followed the journey with a hawk upon his wrist and a couple of spaniels at his horse's heels, pretending to be fully occupied in fowling, but really keeping a close watch, lest any danger might come to the King.

Charles had many narrow escapes. The mare he rode having cast a shoe, he was obliged to stop at a smithy, and, as he was holding the animal's foot, the blacksmith said that he had not yet heard of the capture of *that rogue*, Charles Stuart, upon which the very *rogue* himself, no doubt having a quiet inward laugh on the subject, said that, if Charles were taken, he certainly deserved to be hanged for bringing in the Scots. In a certain house he was recognized by the butler, who had been a servant to one of his personal attendants. Eating bread and butter and drinking ale and sack in the buttery with some of the servants, as was fitting in the circumstances of his disguise, he heard a man, who turned out to be one of his own regiment of guards, giving a minute account of the battle of Worcester.

"I asked him," said Charles, who appeared to be merely a groom, for his hands were stained with walnut-juice and his dress was hoddenn grey, "what kind of man I was, to which he answered by describing exactly both my clothes and my horse; and, then looking upon me, he told me that the King was at least three fingers taller than I. Upon which I made what haste I could out of the buttery."

When it turned out that there was no ship for France leaving Bristol for a month, Charles went secretly to a house called Trent on the borders of Somersetshire, and from that

place sent Lord Wilmot to bargain for a ship to carry him off from Burport near Lyme in Dorsetshire. The bargain having been struck, the King went to an inn at this place, and found the whole house and stable-yard full of Cromwell's redcoats, preparing for an expedition against Jersey. There was nothing for it but to put a bold face on, so Charles led his horse right in among the soldiers, who began to storm and scold at him for a blundering fool. This boldness served its purpose, and nobody suspected him at all. But at Burport, as well as at Bristol, he was disappointed. It happened that the skipper of the hired vessel told his wife that he was going to sea at once and that he was to be well paid for it; but she was either so afraid of his mixing himself up with a secret business, or so angry at being kept out of the secret, that she locked the door on the very night of sailing and would not let him go.

After a failure at Southampton a ship was found at Shoreham in Sussex. Before the arrangement was completed, the King amused himself at Stonehenge one day in counting the stones, a proof of his easy temper and great coolness under circumstances of danger.

At the inn of Brighton, before he embarked, the landlord suddenly kissed his hand as he leant it on a chair, and the master of the ship knew him right well too. But they were too faithful to betray him; and he got safely off the English shore at last. When the ship, in which he sailed, was just in sight of the harbour of Fescamp in France, a suspicious-looking vessel appeared, upon sight of which Charles and Wilmot took to the little cock-boat and were rowed ashore. The ship, that frightened them, turned out to be merely a French *hoy*, and not, as they had feared, an Ostend privateer.

## VI.

## OLIVER CROMWELL AND THE LONG PARLIAMENT.

SOME time after the execution of King Charles I. a dispute arose between Oliver Cromwell and that small body of men, who represented the Long Parliament. There was an intention among the leaders of the Parliament to bring in a number of Presbyterians once more. Now, as Cromwell feared this section of Puritans, he opposed their admission into the House, from which his own soldiers had expelled them a while before. And, when he saw that some were determined to have them in, he took the bold step of expelling the Long Parliament from their seats in the House.

On a certain April day, while he was discussing the affairs of the Government in his lodgings at Whitehall, one of his officers, named Colonel Ingoldsby, came running in to tell him, that the Commons were passing a Bill to admit the Presbyterians, in the hope that it would be all over before he heard of it. He lost no time in going to the house, dressed in the usual sad colours of the Puritan—black clothes and grey worsted stockings. With him marched a small band of musketeers, for what purpose he scarcely knew, since he had not quite made up his mind what to do. Leaving them outside in the lobby, he went into the House, and for some time sat silent in his place. The debate went on; and he listened with grim composed face, until the speaker was about to put the matter to the vote. At that moment he said to Harrison, a man who was anxious for a republic,—

“Now is the time. I must do it.”

After Harrison had cautioned him, he sat down for a moment, and then, rising, took off his hat, and began to speak. He grew so very violent after a while, that some one rebuked him, saying that he was not using language fit for the Parliament to hear.

“I know it,” he cried, losing all control over his actions, and rushing out into the middle of the floor with his hat pushed tightly down upon his greyish hair.

As he walked up and down, speaking with the greatest violence, he presented a figure, more remarkable for rugged energy than for anything approaching to beauty. For he had a swollen and reddish face, with a nose approaching the hue of copper, and the marks of toil and anxiety had left furrows in his cheeks. And in the dress, which hung square and loose upon his massive limbs, he was always more or less a sloven.

Sir Harry Vane and others tried to put him down by loud speaking; but he could match them all.

"I'll put an end to your prating," he cried, "you are no Parliament. Give way to honest men."

The stamping of his foot caused the door to open suddenly; and in poured a number of soldiers with steel caps and doublets of buff leather, holding loaded firelocks in their hands.

"Fetch him down," he cried twice, pointing to the Speaker in the chair; and that venerable personage rose only, when the hand of a determined soldier laid hold of his robe to pull him from his seat.

And then, pointing to the mace which lay on the table of the House, he said with much contempt in his tone—

"Take away that bauble."

The members did not venture to draw a sword, or attempt resistance of any kind; but they walked out of the House as quickly as their dignity would allow them. As Vane passed by on his way out, he ventured to say,—

"This is not honest; yea, it is against morality and common honesty."

To which Cromwell replied, using that language borrowed from the Bible, of which the Puritans were so fond.

"Sir Harry Vane! Sir Harry Vane! the Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane."

In a few minutes after this there was not a member in the House, upon which Cromwell commanded the door to be locked, and sent one of his Colonels off to carry both the key and the mace to Whitehall. He went thither himself too, and told his officers, how "the Spirit of God had come upon him" and "that he had not consulted flesh and blood" in the doing of this daring deed.

## VII.

## THE GREAT PLAGUE AND THE GREAT FIRE.

IN former times, especially in Eastern countries, men were not so cleanly either in their persons or their houses, as they have now become; and in consequence of the dirt, that was allowed to accumulate in the narrow streets and low rooms, many dreadful diseases were common, which have now disappeared. The Plague is the name, by which the most horrible and destructive of these is mentioned in history. Scarcely any reign of tolerable length passed away without a visit from some dreadful pestilence, mainly caused and fostered by filth. But the Great Plague, which afflicted Britain early in the reign of Charles II., was the last and perhaps the worst of these terrific disorders.

At first men began to sicken, one by one, in the beginning of summer, and to drop in the streets, as if suddenly shot by some unseen hand. But in a week or two the deaths came to be counted by the hundred, and soon by the thousand. Every person, who had money enough, went out of London that dreadful summer; but of course there were vast numbers who could not do so. A cross of red was painted on the door of any house, where a person was seized with the Plague, and for a month no one was allowed to go into or come out of the place. And every night a cart went through the silent streets, while the driver, ringing a bell, cried, "Bring out your dead." When he had filled the waggon with corpses, he drove them away to a large hole, into which they were thrown with a quantity of lime. Madmen added to the terror of this time by the frightful howls they uttered in the grass-grown streets; and one was especially noticed, as he ran about screaming in the night-time with a vessel full of blazing coals on his head. Some of the citizens went to live in boats upon the Thames, as a means of avoiding the infection; but this precaution proved often useless. The sickness came between the nearest and dearest; and many a



poor man was obliged to leave his few shillings of weekly wages on the door-step of his house, where perhaps his wife or a little one lay ill, and call aloud, before he went away, that some one within might come and take the money. If he had gone in and caught the infection, all the support of the family would have been lost. It was not until the pinching of the winter cold began to be felt, that the violence of the Plague abated; and even then it did not wholly leave the close foul lanes of the great city of London. It did not finally go, until it was *burned* out.

Next year a terrific fire broke out in London, beginning in a baker's shop near Fish Street Hill. An east wind was blowing very fiercely, and the season had been very dry, so that the flames had both force and food. All along the Thames and backwards into the City the fire spread from house to house, leaping across streets and breaks in the lines of building, as if it were a live wild beast bent on devouring all before it. The people were in many cases too much stupefied to carry their property away, but ran crying and wringing their hands in a helpless manner. The Thames was covered with floating goods and boats carrying off what could be saved, and the fields all round London were filled with heaps of furniture and tents, under which on a little straw the poor took refuge. Above them was a sky glowing like a basin of red-hot copper, and around them the air was hot, like the breath of a furnace, and all filled with sparks whirling before the wind like falling stars. There were 10,000 houses burning at once; and the great dark clouds of smoke, that rose from the flaming oil and resin in the warehouses by the Thames, rolled fifty miles away to astonish the simple country folk of Berkshire and Oxford. Nobody could go near the streets that were on fire, both by reason of the extreme heat and of the danger that arose from the falling timber and the melted lead that came pouring off the roofs. Perhaps the grandest sight was the burning of St. Paul's Cathedral, the stones of which cracked like explosive shells. A scaffolding round this ancient building aided the flames to creep up the sides of the spire, until they had enveloped the whole in a red mantle of destruction. Here the pouring down of lead was perhaps the worst that occurred anywhere. The falling roof

of St. Paul's broke into St. Faith's, where a great number of books had been stored by the stationers, and these, taking fire, burned for a week. All the metal work of the great building, including iron as well as lead, melted almost at once in the fierce heat, and the bells were also destroyed. The smoke of the burned dead filled the city with its nauseous smell; and this, coupled with the fact that men, walking a good way off from the fire, had their hair singed and the soles of their feet burned, prevented much going out to look on from mere curiosity. And, when to all these causes of fear and trouble we add a rumour, which spread abroad to the effect that the French and the Dutch had landed and were in the city, we shall have some idea of the state London was in during that terrible week.

## VIII.

## THE LAST BATTLE ON ENGLISH SOIL.

HAVING landed at Lyme in Dorsetshire, the Duke of Monmouth, one of the sons of Charles II., fought a battle with the troops of King James II. on the waste and swampy field called Sedgemoor. There has never since been a battle in England.

Intending to surprise the royal army, which was commanded by a lazy and luxurious general called Feversham, Monmouth, pale and anxious-looking, rode out of Bridgewater at the head of his soldiers about eleven o'clock one moonlight Sunday night. The *Aurora Borealis* was shooting its bright streamers over the sky; but a mist, which lay on the moor, served as a cover for the approach of the rebel army. That army had been hastily raised. The foot-soldiers were just ploughmen and miners, who had tied scythes upon poles, and had rubbed oil on the old rusty guns, with which they had been in the habit of poaching and frightening crows. The horsemen were even worse, for scarcely one of the clumsy cart-horses they rode had ever heard a shot fired. They had six miles to go, and the success of the attempt depended on their making no noise: consequently there were strict orders against the beating of drums and the discharge of firearms. The watchword of the army, thus creeping on over the moor in the foggy moonshine, was Soho.

In two hours they had reached the place, where deep ditches, whose bottoms were filled with slushy mud, ran across the moorland. These were called *rhines*. First came the Black Ditch, across which the army walked quietly on a pathway made of stone. Then the Langmoor Rhine stood in their way: but here a mistake, which the guide made about the proper path, occasioned delay and confusion, and in the bustle of finding the track again a pistol went off by accident. This destroyed all hope of a surprise, for some of the outlying pickets of the Life Guards were startled by the

shot, and, looking to the direction it came from, saw the indistinct figures of Monmouth's men through the mist. Firing into the fog, they galloped away to rouse the royal troops. Drums began to beat the signal for falling into rank: Monmouth saw that unless he made a dash all hope of victory was gone. He therefore ordered the cavalry to charge in front, while he led up the foot behind. As the horsemen went forward at a rapid pace, they saw something black before them, which they could not account for. Drawing a tight rein as they approached it, they found to their dismay that it was another *rhine*, of which they had received no warning. On the opposite side the musketeers of James were blowing their matches in preparation for a volley. A short quick talk took place across the water.

"For whom are you?" cried a royal officer.

"For the King," was the rebel answer.

"For which King?"

"King Monmouth—God with us."

The reply to this war-cry came back in the shape of a shower of bullets, which emptied several of the rebel saddles, and scattered the whole troop of horse in different directions.

Then the foot-soldiers of Monmouth came up to the ditch, and began to fire across it at the royal troops. But they were not used to the firing of volleys, and, although they were very cool and brave, they aimed too high, and sent their balls over the heads of the enemy. Monmouth himself was among them, with a pike in his hand, directing the attack. But in the confusion caused by the flight of the cavalry, the drivers of the carts, which held the powder, took fright, and whipped their horses into a jolting gallop. This left the brave footmen in the unfortunate position of having guns, but no ammunition to make the guns useful. They cried eagerly for "ammunition"; but, getting none, were forced to turn their muskets into clubs, and beat at the enemy with the heavy butts. During these things the cannon of the King's army were coming across the moor with great difficulty. They would scarcely have been pulled across the wet half mile at all, had not a Bishop, living near, lent his coach-horses and harness for this use. Long

as the cannon were in coming, and badly as they were managed when they came, their irregular fire did what no attack had yet been able to do. It broke the line of Monmouth's musketeers and pikemen, and put an end to the battle of Sedgemoor.

A few days later some soldiers, searching a thicket, in which brambled hedges divided little fields deep with pease, rye, and oats, found a pale and frightened man lying in a ditch. He wore a common shepherd's dress, and the stubble of his grey unshaven beard gave his face a wretched look. He shook violently, and could not speak. This was Monmouth. He had a pocket full of green pease, because, although he had a watch and money, he was so afraid of capture that he dared not go to buy food, and was forced to eat what he could gather near his hiding-place.

His execution was a dreadful scene. It took place on Tower Hill amid an enormous crowd, which spread itself even to the chimney-tops. He felt the edge of the axe before he laid his head down, and said that he was afraid it was not sharp enough. This proved true: the headsman was very weak. The first blow only cut Monmouth slightly, and he turned his head to look at the executioner with reproachful eyes. Again and again the man chopped and chopped in vain: and at last was forced, amid the yells and curses of the crowd, to get a knife, and actually carve the head off the body.

## IX.

## HOW A KING OF ENGLAND LOST HIS CROWN.

I HAVE already described how a King of England lost his head: I have now to tell how a son of that beheaded monarch lost his crown.

King James II., in utter defiance of a leading principle of the British Constitution, proclaimed what was called a *Declaration of Indulgence*, permitting all people to worship in their own fashion without fear of punishment. Now this seems to have been a very right and proper thing to do: and indeed it was so, if it had been done in the constitutional way. But in this matter James acted on his own authority alone, although laws could properly be changed only with the consent of Parliament. He also acted tyrannically and unlawfully towards the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. The *Declaration*, in its second form, was appointed to be read from the pulpit on two successive Sundays: but the clergymen of London, except *four*, refused to obey the order. Some of the leading prelates signed a petition, objecting to such acts of the King; and it was presented by them in person. For this they were brought to trial in the Court of King's Bench; and the jury spent a whole night without food, before they agreed upon the verdict of "Not Guilty." The joy of the people, which was displayed in the usual way by cheers and fireworks, and in a less usual manner by tears flowing down the cheeks of strong men, showed how anxiously they had regarded the issue of the trial.

That very day a man dressed like a sailor started from London with a letter, addressed to William, Prince of Orange, inviting him over to take the English crown. Without much delay he came, and landed at Torbay in Devonshire. There was almost no fighting. A few shots were exchanged, as William moved towards London. When he saw that he had no army to depend on, and that his lords and captains were fast deserting him, King James made up

his mind to leave the country. Accordingly, at three o'clock one morning, he stole quietly from his bedroom, and went by a secret passage out to the street, where a hackney-coach was waiting. He drove to the Thames, which he crossed in a wherry. As he was rowing across, he was childish enough to fling the Great Seal into the water, in order that his successor might not be able to carry on the affairs of State. This Seal was fished up in a net some months afterwards. An unlucky stoppage occurred off the island of Sheppey, after he had gone aboard the *hoy* or small ship, that was employed to carry him to France. While the skipper was waiting for the wind to go down, some fishermen came on board, and insisted that all should go on shore to be examined by a magistrate. The odd-looking wig, which the King wore, did not save him from being recognized, and he was detained in custody. But the Lords, anxious to get him out of the kingdom, sent word to set him at liberty. He came back to London; but he soon left that city again by night, and at the mouth of the Medway found a smack, which carried him out of the estuary of the Thames.

Aided by the French, he tried afterwards in Ireland to recover the crown which he had lost. But the decisive battle of the Boyne ruined all his hopes, and sent him in flight back to France, where he died some time later.

## X.

## GLENCOE AND DARIEN.

WHEN William III. had been a few years upon the English throne, some of the men, who managed the kingdom of Scotland for him, determined to bring the wild Highlanders into complete submission. A proclamation was therefore issued, which ordered all the clansmen to take an oath, that they would have William for their King: and whoever refused or forgot to take this oath before a fixed day, was to be killed. Nearly all came forward and took the oath, to the great disappointment of those Scottish statesmen, who wanted an opportunity of teaching the Highland clans a terrible lesson. But there was one man, Mac Ian, a chief of the Macdonalds of Glencoe in Argyleshire, who went only at the last moment to Fort-William to swear allegiance to the King. When he got there, he found that a Colonel was not the proper person to administer the oath, and that he must go all the way to Inverary and swear before the Sheriff. It took him six days to travel through the snow to that town: and at first the Sheriff did not think that he could receive the oath so late. But, when he heard the chieftain's reason for being late, he agreed to allow him to swear; and so old Mac Ian went home, glad at having, as he thought, escaped from a great danger. But he had not really escaped. Sir John Dalrymple, the Master of Stair, heard that he had come late, and resolved to make an example of him. He got King William to sign a paper, giving orders for the destruction of the tribe of Glencoe; and he wrote to some of his officials in the west, desiring the work to be done secretly and suddenly, and expressing a hope that the soldiers would not trouble the Government by taking prisoners.

About a month afterwards a party of 120 men, under two officers, entered the dark and barren pass of Glencoe, and went straight to the rude houses of the Macdonalds. They came pretending that they were friends in need of quarters, and for a fortnight they lived among the simple



mountaineers, amusing themselves with sports by day and cards in the long evenings. All the while the Captain was gathering information and sending it off to his Colonel. At last, one morning at five, the soldiers went into the houses and began to kill the Highlanders. When they came to the door of the chieftain's house, he thought they were coming in as friends, and called for some liquor; but, while he was hastily dressing himself, the report of a musket rang through the room, and he fell dead with a bullet through his brain. His wife too was attacked, and so brutal was the treatment she received that she died next day. The noise of the guns saved many lives, or at least afforded to many a warning, which led them to run away up the neighbouring mountains. There they had no food, no shelter; and the icy winds of February were sweeping the snowy hills. Thirty-eight were slaughtered by the soldiers: how many died among the snow we cannot tell. This dreadful piece of treachery is called the Massacre of Glencoe.

Between the two American continents there is a narrow neck of porphyry, which is called the Isthmus of Darien. It is so very narrow in comparison with the huge masses to the north and south, that enterprising men have more than once thought of cutting a canal through it for the purpose of joining the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and saving ships the trouble, time, and danger of going round Cape Horn. At present a railway crosses this important central stripe of land. William Paterson, the energetic founder of the Bank of England, fixed upon this place as a suitable site for a colony, which would open a trade with India towards the west; and he took no rest, until he had induced his countrymen, the Scotch, to raise what was to them a very large sum of money for this purpose. Three ships, carrying 1200 men, sailed from the port of Leith amid the cheers and weeping of a great multitude, and in about three months reached a shore, abounding in strange plants and animals. The trunks of the bamboo and the cocoa-tree were interlaced with creeping plants, whose large blossoms of crimson and white and blue made a very pretty picture. All around the colonists found fields of pine-apples and golden maize, which proved the fertility of the soil. Their hearts were

very joyful, as they set about building a fortress, whose planks were of rosewood and the sandal-tree. But the joy lasted only for a short time. In spite of the friendship of the Indians, who supplied them with fresh food, symptoms of misfortune began to show themselves: their first evils arose from disunion within their own fortress: then came the annoyances from finding their stock of provisions, brought from Scotland, grown mouldy and unfit for use: the rain began to fall, and the fair shore was suddenly changed into a pestilential swamp. They heard rumours that the Spaniards, who claimed the whole Isthmus of Darien, were preparing to attack them, and they also heard a very cruel piece of news to the effect that the English Government had sent out orders to Jamaica, Barbadoes, and New York, desiring the English settlers in these places to give the Scotch colony of Darien no assistance in arms, ammunition, or any other thing. They looked eagerly every daybreak and sunset over the sea for the vessels they expected from home with food and succour. None came. At last a sail appeared, but when it touched the shore it was found to be only a vessel, which they had sent to Jamaica, come back *empty*. Those, that were left of them, fled at length from the place of graves to find a little charity at New York and Jamaica in spite of the Government order.

Another expedition came to Darien to find the site of the fortress of New St. Andrews overgrown with huge leaves and brambles, among which noisome snakes were crawling. For a time a brave soldier named Campbell endeavoured to restore the settlement. But one day, after his return from the Pacific side, where he had succeeded in taking a Spanish fortress, he saw from the ridge of the hilly range, that forms the Isthmus, twenty-five ships of the enemy blocking up the harbour. For six weeks they held out: but, when they had melted all their pewter plates and cups into balls, and had eaten almost the last scraps of food in the fortress, they yielded to superior force. Thus perished a Scottish colony, which, with a little fostering care from England, might have risen to be the capital of the New World: for there is no finer site for commerce than the narrow neck, which so slightly separates the Atlantic from the Pacific waters.

## XI.

## MARLBOROUGH.

**DURING** the reigns of Charles II., James II., and William III., a man was rising in fame as a military commander, whose name is one of the greatest which we have. His name was John Churchill, and he was a remarkably handsome man; but his greatness was disfigured by an extreme love of money, which often led him to commit mean actions.

It was not, however, until the reign of Queen Anne that he came to his greatest glory as a General. A war began with France, which was principally carried on in the country called Belgium; and there Churchill, who had been made Earl of Marlborough for his adherence to the cause of William III., at first exercised his genius in besieging and taking some of the great fortresses, which lie along the rivers. But he soon grew tired of this work, and began to act on a grander scale. Marching along the Rhine and then turning eastward over the mountains into Bavaria, he advanced to a little village on the Danube called Blenheim. It was a Sunday morning in August, when the French and Bavarian army faced the English troops under Marlborough. Tallard and Marsin were the French Marshals, who opposed the soldier of Devonshire. The first attack was made by the British upon the village of Blenheim, which had been barricaded in a hurry with the trunks of trees. The French fired through the loopholes, they had left in their defences, so hotly and continuously that the British were forced to recoil and retreat, although many of them with desperate valour climbed the wooden palings, and struck at the French musketeers with the stocks of their guns. The cavalry of the English tried to make some impression on Blenheim, but did not succeed. Cannon alone would do. But Marlborough had in the meantime with quick eye noticed a wide space between the two wings of the enemy's line. In playing the easy game, called Draughts, most of us know how important it is to place a man between

two of our opponent's: in war the army, which gets between two others, is almost sure of victory. Knowing this well and seeing nothing to oppose him except the French cavalry, Marlborough made a quick movement of nearly all his men, which cut the hostile line of battle, placed his soldiers between the two broken parts, and then, turning on these, beat them in succession. The brave men, who held the village of Blenheim, were then obliged to surrender. This victory was looked upon in England as a magnificent triumph; and the joyful nation presented the victor with a splendid palace and estate.

Marlborough also won three great battles in Belgium. They were the battles of Ramilies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet. But his political enemies came into power; and, before the Treaty of Utrecht was made, he was obliged to resign the command of the army. His influence had been long kept up by the ascendancy, which his wife held over the mind of Queen Anne. The Duchess and the Queen used to talk to one another familiarly as Mrs. Freeman and Mrs. Morley, and the Duchess made the Queen do just as she pleased. But there came to wait upon the Queen a cunning woman, named Masham, who managed to gain the favour of Her Majesty and to deprive the Duchess of all influence in affairs of State. The haughty peeress, not aware how entirely her influence was gone, endeavoured to force the Queen to obey her after the old fashion, and so far lost command of her temper on several occasions as to break out into violent abuse. This kind of conduct completed the disgrace of both Duchess and Duke; and the latter was accused in the House of Commons of having embezzled very large sums of the money given to pay the foreign troops, and also of having taken bribes from the men, who contracted to supply bread to the army. Being dismissed from his command and persecuted by two lawsuits raised against him, one of them being for arrears due to the builders of Blenheim House, which he had always looked upon as a national gift, Marlborough went across to the Continent, where he stayed until George the First became King. Then, returning, he was again made Commander of the Forces, and lived in England until his death.

## XII.

## THE SOUTH SEA BUBBLE.

WHEN the reign of George I. was nearly over, a memorable debate took place one February day in the British House of Commons. The principal speaker was Mr. Aislalie, Chancellor of the Exchequer, who made a proposal that certain commercial privileges should be given to the South Sea Company on condition of their undertaking to pay off the National Debt in twenty-six years. The members of the House were so surprised at the proposal, that there was no reply for about a quarter of an hour. At last a cautious man suggested that there should be an open competition among such companies as were willing to try the reduction of the Debt, so that the best possible bargain might be made for the nation. The Chancellor of Exchequer, who had already in secret closed the bargain with the South Sea Company, said scornfully that this would be like setting the nation up to auction, and completely lost his temper. Walpole, a man of great sagacity and talent, having spoken in favour of receiving proposals from other companies, the debate closed with an agreement to submit the scheme to public competition.

The Bank of England and the South Sea Company then began to bid against each other for the preference; but the latter triumphed by offering more than seven millions as a present to the public. When Aislalie at one time had some thoughts of dividing the business between the Bank and the Company, Sir John Blunt, the leading South Sea Director, said,—

“No, sir, we will not cut the child in two.”

This was of course said in allusion to the proposal, which Solomon made to the two mothers. The Bill passed; and at once the shares began to rise in price.

Robert Walpole went to spend the summer months in festivity at his country-seat of Houghton in Norfolk; and

there he heard the strange news of the delirium, which had come upon the people in London. The Directors of the South Sea Company, in order to increase the value of their shares and excite the public to buy them, circulated wonderful stories about the riches of the various places, to which they alone were now allowed to trade. It was hinted and believed that mines of gold and silver had been discovered, which would bring great wealth to the Company. Then it was very easy to form visions of a profitable trade in the wonderfully varied produce of tropical lands. Spices and sandal-wood, coffee, sugar, and cotton, with a thousand other things, which come to maturity in the natural hot-beds near the equator and seem to distant talkers about them to grow without cultivation or trouble, were always present to the heated minds of the speculators in this scheme. The public ran so eagerly to buy shares, that the price went up, until a piece of paper, which at one time cost £100, came to sell for more than £1000. When this huge Bubble began to expand, a great number of smaller companies, formed with the most extravagant objects, also grew up and shone for a while with deceitful prosperity. There was a company to make salt-water fresh—another to make oil out of sun-flower seeds—a third for trading in human hair to make those huge bushy wigs, which were fashionable at the time,—and a multitude of others for many purposes, sensible and ridiculous. The place, in which the shares were bought and sold, was called 'Change Alley. It was crowded from morning till night with people of every kind. A tall fashionable in a sky-blue coat with silver edging might be seen eagerly reading the prospectus of a new company to a stout rosy-faced squire fresh from the country, with a whip under his arm and thick-soled boots all covered with the mud of the cattle-market. Sedan chairs and hackney coaches were arriving and departing every moment. Ladies with patched faces and fans struggled through the crowd, which had little mercy on the large hoops they wore. Even sweeps and errand boys were to be seen in the Alley, from which arose all day long a confused noise of voices, crying out the certain advantages of investing money in some new scheme. We may form an idea of the madness and credulity; which had

seized on the minds of the people, by the following instance. One morning a clever knave issued an advertisement, saying that he would unfold in the afternoon a new scheme, which should surpass all others in the certain and quick return of its profits. He would tell no one what it was; but those, who paid so many guineas, would receive a ticket permitting them to take shares in the mysterious company. That morning he received many thousand pounds for his pieces of pasteboard; and, when the ticket-holders came to his office in the afternoon, they found the door shut, and the gentleman off to the Continent. He had no scheme at all to propose; the whole thing was a piece of clever fraud. The highest persons in the land embarked in these speculations. The Prince of Wales made a large sum as governor of a Copper Company; and all the leading statesmen, but one or two, bought and sold shares. It was even said that King George traded in stock and made a handsome profit on his jobs.

This went on through the heat of summer; but at last the South Sea Company unintentionally killed itself. It happened thus. Seeing other companies springing up all round and drawing a great deal of money into their speculations, the Directors of the Big Bubble, backed by Parliamentary influence, obtained a writ against the smaller schemes and crushed a good many of them out of existence. This destroyed the confidence of the public in shares of any kind; and the price of South Sea Stock began to sink at once. What had been sold in August for £1000, could find no buyers at £300 in September. In fact the Bubble had collapsed, and was found to be empty.

Then men of every rank began to run away from the bankruptcy, into which their imprudence had led them. There was so great a ruin among the shareholders, that some angry people proposed that the Directors should be sewed up alive in sacks and thrown into the Thames. In this crisis Robert Walpole came forward, and proposed a plan, by which after a time the mischief was to some extent remedied; but the statesmen, who were involved in the frauds practised by the Company, were disgraced; and some of them died of the shame.

## XIII.

## THE ADVENTURES OF PRINCE CHARLIE.

SOME of the finest songs of Scotland are those connected with the name of "Bonnie Prince Charlie," under which appellation the loyalty of the Jacobites clung to the grandson of James II., Prince Charles Edward, the young Pretender. He was in his youth extremely handsome—tall and of a good figure—with an oval face, light blue eyes, and long curling fair hair, which fell down on his shoulders. His manners were very graceful and pleasant; and all his personal qualities were such as to fit him for winning admiration. His education, as displayed by his letters, was certainly deficient, for he wrote very badly and disfigured his writing by bad spelling. "Umer" was *his* way of spelling "humour"—"sord" his rendering of "sword"—but still more comical and surprising is the word "Gems," by which he intended to signify his father "James." Field-sports, of which he was very fond, trained him to habits of enduring fatigue and facing danger, which proved very useful to him during his British campaigns and his subsequent wanderings.

Having left Rome one night in the dress of a Spanish courier, attended only by a single groom, Charles Edward went to Paris, and, not having succeeded in obtaining an interview with the King, travelled on to the seaport of Gravelines. There he lived for some time under the name of Douglas, spending his days in answering long letters, and often buying fish for his own dinner, as he strolled about on the beach. He was waiting for the sailing of a French fleet. When it sailed, it was met by so violent a storm that it was driven back; and the French Ministers gave up for a time the intended invasion of Britain. Charles then went to live privately about three miles from Paris.

It soon appeared that whatever was to be done must be done at once, and by himself. He accordingly borrowed a sum of money, and prepared two brigs, the *Elizabeth* and the



*Doutelle*, and, embarking in the latter vessel, left the mouth of the Loire. The *Elizabeth* met a British cruiser, and in the fight that followed received so much damage that she had to return. The *Doutelle* sailed for a fortnight, until she arrived among the Hebrides.

Attended by seven devoted adherents, well known as "The seven men of Moidart," Prince Charles Edward landed on the shore of Lochnanuagh in Inverness-shire, one day in July; and in less than a month, which was spent in summoning the Macdonalds and the Camerons, his standard of red silk with a white centre was raised upon a hillock in Glenfinnan, and sixteen hundred Highland bonnets were tossed up in the air with joyful shouting.

A mistaken movement of the Commander-in-chief, Sir John Cope, who marched out of Perthshire towards Inverness, gave Prince Charles an opportunity of pushing on at once to Edinburgh, which he reached by moving through Perth and past Stirling. The capital was entered with very little trouble, and the Prince took up his quarters in the ancient palace of Holyrood. Sir John Cope landed his army that day at Dunbar, and Charlie moved out of Edinburgh to meet him. The battle of Prestonpans, in which the Highlanders gained a decided victory, followed. It was an evening in September, upon which the two armies came in sight of each other, and the Highlanders could scarcely be restrained from rushing on the foe at once. A piece of swampy land lay between the armies, when the night closed. During the darkness some indistinct sounds which they could not understand, were heard by the sentinels of Cope. The meaning of them became clear at dawn, when the Highland host came rushing with fierce yells out of the rising mist upon the English lines. A gentleman in attendance upon the Pretender, knowing the ground well, had led the clansmen across the swamp by a path, in which they did not sink above the knee. The surprise was completely successful. In six minutes the battle was won.

After lying for six weeks in Holyrood, Prince Charlie invaded England, entering by Carlisle. But the Jacobites of England did not rise in his favour; and, when he had reached Derby, his officers insisted on a retreat. He was forced to

comply with their wish, and the army went irregularly back across the Border. As he rode through Glasgow a pistol was snapped at him in the street: but the powder would not burn. At Falkirk he defeated the ferocious General Hawley, and then marched away to Inverness, soon followed by the Duke of Cumberland, who fixed his head-quarters at Aberdeen.

Before he took Inverness, which was surrounded with a ditch and a palisade, Charles stopped a while at Moy, where Lady MacIntosh mustered the clansmen in his cause, heading them on horseback with pistols ready for use. Lord London, who held Inverness for the King, made a march by night to Moy in the hope of making Charles prisoner. This attempt, however, was defeated by a stratagem, adopted by a few of the clan MacIntosh. Hiding themselves in different parts of the wood, they fired at the royal troops, and raised the war-cries of Lochiel, Keppoch, and other chiefs so loudly and frequently as to frighten the royalists into the belief, that they were surrounded by the whole Highland force. They accordingly retreated with a confusion, which caused the affair to be called the Rout of Moy.

The Prince then occupied Inverness: but his purse ran so low, that he was forced to pay his troops with small supplies of meal, and even these were sometimes not forthcoming, upon which occasions the men were obliged to go and search for food. A little boiled cabbage often served the officers for dinner. The approach of Cumberland led Charles out to meet him. Taking up his abode at Culloden House, the Pretender, upon hearing that his enemy's birth-day was being celebrated at Nairn with great feasting, resolved to march thither by night and surprise the revellers. Setting the heather on fire, in order that his troops might be thought to be still lying on the moor, he started, having given as a watchword his father's empty title of "King James the Eighth." But his men had eaten that day only a biscuit each—the night was dark—the way wild and toilsome—and, after struggling on all night, he was forced to bring them back to their cheerless bed upon Culloden Moor.

Next day a battle was fought there. It began with cannon. A well-aimed ball killed a groom, who held a horse

beside the Prince, and dashed the clay all over himself. It then began to snow right in the faces of the Highlanders. Lord George Murray, restless at seeing his men dropping under the fire of the royal cannon, sent to ask the Prince's leave to charge with the right and centre. The request was granted; and the Highlanders, sword in hand, rushed on so impetuously that they scattered the enemy before them like chaff. Unfortunately, however, Cumberland, knowing their method of fighting, had drawn up a second line of musketeers behind that which they had broken. From this second line came so close and deadly a discharge, that the Highlanders, finding their triumph all at once turned into disaster, were driven back in a confused mass.

The Macdonalds stood inactive on the left, because the post of honour on the right, which they claimed as the hereditary privilege of their clan, had not been given to them. They saw their chief, who vainly tried to lead them on, shot with many bullets in front of them; but they would not stir, and soon fell back to the second line. The Highland army was then so severely assailed by the royal forces, that it broke into two bands of fugitives: and the battle of Culloden was over.

Prince Charlie, who could scarcely believe his eyes, rode quickly off to a house, where Lord Lovat was residing; but he found no welcome there. Starting at ten o'clock that night, he galloped through the darkness to Invergarry Castle, which he reached about two hours before dawn. While he slept for a short time in his clothes upon the floor, two salmon were taken from a pool close by, and his breakfast consisted merely of fish and water. After spending eight days in the utmost danger, while engaged in making his way to the western shore, he set sail for a group of rocks called Long Island; but storms beat his little boat about, and his food consisted often of only meal and water. At last he landed on South Uist, where Clanranald gave him some help. But rumours of his presence in that island reached the royal troops; and a movement was made, which was intended to catch him as in a trap. Soldiers to the number of 2000 landed; and frigates and sloops of war surrounded the coast of South Uist. It seemed impossible for him to escape. In this crisis he was saved by the wit and heroism of a lady

called Flora Macdonald, whose stepfather was a captain in the royal militia, and who was staying on a visit with the Clanranalds. Little and mild as Flora was, she proved herself a real heroine. Going with Lady Clanranald to a hut upon the shore, she found the Prince roasting a sheep's heart upon a wooden skewer, and, with tears of sorrow at his desolation, she helped him to dress himself in the gown of a maid-servant, which she had carried to his hiding-place. She had already got a passport from her stepfather, permitting her to go to Skye, and to bring with her a servant-man and a girl called Betty Burke. In the disguise of Betty Charles went on board a boat that evening, and they rowed away to Skye. When, after a night at sea, they approached the shore, a shower of bullets came splashing round them from the point, on which they had intended to land. Finding a safe place, Charles hid himself on shore, while Flora went to the wife of Sir Alexander Macdonald to beg assistance for the Prince. The house was filled with soldiers, so that Lady Macdonald could not give him shelter: but she sent him to Macdonald of Kingsburgh, her husband's factor. Having parted from Flora at Portree, Charles, dressed as a man-servant and now called Lewis Caw, crossed the water to Rasay. A very miserable picture has been drawn of his appearance at this time. Want of food and sleep, exposure to wind and rain, and the incessant biting of flies had made him thin, yellow, and diseased in his skin.

Flora Macdonald, when it became known that she had aided the Prince in his escape, was carried to London, and put in prison for a year. She was then released, and a number of ladies, favourable to the Stuarts, presented her with nearly £1500. Afterwards, having married the son of Kingsburgh, she emigrated with her husband to North America; but the war there induced them to come home, and they both died in Skye.

After leaving Rasay, Charles hid on the mainland. The soldiers in search of him were out over the whole country; and on one occasion he was so hemmed in by the line of their sentinels, that for two days he lay or crawled among the heather, not daring to light a fire. It was only by creeping at night down a rocky gorge, which a torrent had worn during

the winter floods, that he managed to escape from this perilous situation. Soon afterwards he reached a cave of the hills, in which seven robbers lived, and during the three weeks he spent with them, he might any day have been betrayed for the sake of the £30,000, which the Government had offered for his arrest. These poor men, however, though their calling was dishonest, were not base enough for such conduct. Instead of betraying him, they fed him, and even ventured into Fort Augustus for newspapers and information. One day they brought him the royal gift of a cake of ginger-bread.

At last the Prince managed to join two of his devoted adherents—Cluny and Lochiel—of whom the latter was wounded in the leg; and then the royal wanderer, though still far from safe, found better food and greater ease. Running to a saucepan and snatching a silver spoon, when first he came in among them almost famished, he commenced with wolfish haste to devour the collops, which had been simmering on the fire. "Now," said he, "I live like a Prince." While perched with Cluny and Lochiel in a curious den on Mount Benalder, which was called the Cage from the fact of its being hung almost in mid-air, and whose safety also consisted in the leafy screen of a dense thicket, he heard the joyful news that two French vessels, which had been sent to carry him away, had come to anchor in the very arm of the sea—Lochnanuagh—where he had landed fourteen months earlier. The news brought a great number of fugitives to the place; and there, with about a hundred others, Prince Charlie set sail from the land of his defeat and peril. He never saw Scotland again.

But, four years afterwards, a person, calling himself Mr. Smith, came to London with a single attendant, the dress of neither master nor man betokening rank above the common. A certain person brought him at the dead of night into a room, full of men with eager wonder and joy in their faces, and, locking the door, said—

"Here is the person you want."

It was Prince Charlie, the son of that uncrowned King, in memory of whom loyal Jacobites, when drinking the King's health, always passed their wine across the water-bottle, thus signifying that they drank, not to the Hanoverian

monarch on the English throne, but to the King "over the water."

The eagerness of discussion soon grew very warm; and the men, whose flushed cheeks and lighted eyes showed how deeply in earnest they were, made so many conditions and terms about the plot, that Charles found it necessary to interpose.

"Dispose of me, gentlemen, as you please," said he, "my life is in your power, and I therefore can stipulate for nothing. Yet give me, I entreat, one solemn promise, that if your design should succeed, the present family shall be sent safely and honourably home."

The design came to nothing; although Mr. Smith's visit was probably twice repeated. Yet the Jacobite spirit lived long after the chance of a successful rising had passed away. A striking instance of it is afforded by the following anecdote.

It is customary upon the occasion of a coronation for a person, called Dymock, to come forward as the champion of the new sovereign, and after the ancient fashion of chivalry to throw down a glove in defiance of all who might dare to dispute the monarch's right to the crown he or she is assuming. It is a mere form, retained because it is an old traditional observance and a picturesque relic of the feudal times. But it was asserted that, when the usual ceremony was gone through at the coronation of George III., some one stepped out from the crowd, and, lifting the gauntlet, disappeared in the mass again, thus challenging the right of the House of Brunswick to the British throne.

It is very sad to think how Prince Charles Edward fell in his later days. During his wild adventures in the Highlands he learned to drink whisky, and the habit of drinking increased its hold upon him. At the age of fifty-two he married a lady of twenty, who soon deserted him. It is pitiful to recal the broken-down soldier, with grey hair and trembling hands, who believed in the prophecies of an impostor called Nostrodamus, and who kept a box of money under his bed for the expenses of a journey to England, which he expected to be called on suddenly to take. He died at last of paralysis, and his dust sleeps under a marble tomb in St. Peter's at Rome.

## XIV.

## HOW CLIVE FOUNDED OUR INDIAN EMPIRE.

THE pranks of little Bob Clive, who was once the terror of the shopkeepers of Market Drayton in Shropshire, all fore-showed a decision of purpose and audacity in action, which we can clearly descry in the ripe manhood of Robert Lord Clive. On one occasion he was so anxious to get a smooth stone out of a waterspout, for the purpose of making ducks and drakes on a pond, that he went up to the top of the church tower and let himself down over the parapet to the spout. On another, while he was engaged with a troop of idle boys, whose captain in mischief he was, in damming up a dirty stream with turf for the purpose of turning its course into the shop of a hostile tradesman, the bank of turf gave way, and the toil of an hour seemed likely to be destroyed in a moment by the gushing water, when he flung his body across the breach, and blocked the way, until his play-mates had made a heap of sods sufficiently high to stop the flow. At last he became so great a torment to the neighbours and his parents, that a writership in the East India Company's service was obtained for him, and he was shipped off to Madras.

His life as a clerk was wearisome; and the debts, into which his scanty pay forced him, grew very heavy. Vexed by his circumstances and the rebukes he suffered from his superiors, he locked himself into his own room one day for the purpose of committing suicide. Twice he raised the flint pistol to his head and pulled the trigger; twice it snapped without going off. He laid it down, and sat brooding over his troubles, when a friend knocked at the door. Clive let him in. The pistol was lying on the table.

"Take it and fire it out of the window," said the desponding clerk.

The friend took it up, drew the trigger, and the report echoed through the room.

Clive sprang up and cried,—

“I feel I am reserved for something great.”

And then he told his friend, how he had failed twice in his attempt to destroy himself. It was true; he *was* destined to do a great work: but the madness of the suicide was not past for ever, as we shall see.

The two great exploits, by which he secured to Britain the possession of Madras and Bengal, were the defence of Arcot and the battle of Plassey.

When the French seized Madras, Clive escaped in the dress of a Mussulman to Fort St. David. There, with nothing to do as a clerk, he took a musket and went out to fight: and his daring valour soon made him so conspicuous that he was intrusted with the command of men. While Chunda Sahib, a native pretender, who was in alliance with the French, was besieging Trichinopoly, Clive advanced in the midst of a terrific storm of thunder and lightning to the town of Arcot, which was the capital of the Carnatic. Arcot consisted of some close straggling streets, surrounding a citadel, whose ramparts were low and broken. So frightened was the native officer, who commanded the place, that he yielded it at once to Clive. Then came the grand difficulty: having got the fortress, to keep it. The young Englishman found within the loose and crumbling walls just eight cannon of different sizes, and he expected to get two eighteen-pounders from Madras. With these mounted at favourable points, he commenced his defence in the face of a native army, growing every day larger. In several sallies he was successful; and in the difficult undertaking of bringing the two cannon from Madras through the enemy's lines he also succeeded. They then grew furious, and showered cannon-balls and bullets on the walls in vast numbers. The supply of rice within Arcot began at last to fail, upon which the sepoys nobly came to Clive and asked him to give the small daily supply of grain to the Europeans, since they were content to live on the thin gruel in which the rice was boiled. In spite of famine and assault the defence was admirably sustained. The foe made up their minds to a last desperate attack, and chose a holy day, on which Mahometan devotees used to chew *bang*, till they



were in a state of mad intoxication, in honour of two murdered saints. Clive knew it and prepared. With the dawn huge elephants were driven towards the gates, which they were intended to force open with the plates of massive iron bound upon their foreheads. At the same time swarms of dark turbaned men ran from their camp and leaped down into the ditch, wherever it was full of rubbish; while others got upon a raft, where the ditch held water, and tried to push it over to the broken walls. Clive was ready for both attempts. The elephants, smarting under a rain of bullets, which penetrated their thick skins, reared ponderously and ran back upon their drivers, trampling them to death. With his own hand Clive pointed a cannon, which sent a shower of grap among the crowd huddled on the raft, and cleared it at once. The enemy, baffled at every point, gave up the siege and withdrew. This defence was the turning point in the strife, which secured to Britain the possession of Madras.

The tyranny and cruelty of an Indian prince, called Sujah Dowlah, who took Calcutta, brought Clive to Bengal for the sake of revenging the massacre of the Black Hole. Deserted by the Governor and Commandant, who escaped in boats, more than a hundred Europeans were captured by this boyish monster, and were pushed into an underground cell only twenty feet square, with no means of admitting air except two little windows secured with iron bars. In a few minutes they began to feel suffocation, and screamed out to the guard: but the guard only laughed. A dreadful struggle then began among the prisoners to get near the air-holes, for on this their lives depended. In this struggle the weakest were overcome and sank down to die. Money was offered in immense sums to the sentinels, if they would go and waken the Prince: but they refused, because these Eastern tyrants used sometimes to cut off a man's head for so slight a thing as rousing them from sleep. Hour after hour the screams and struggles grew fainter, for the few that remained alive were too weak to cry out; and, when in the morning an order came to open the door, the gush of a hot and dreadful stench from the putrefying corpses within almost overpowered the men who undid the bolts. Of the persons that came out alive, fever killed several in a short time.

This crime was avenged on the field of Plassey. There Olive, having retaken Calcutta, met the cruel Nabob in battle. The native army was enormous; the British force very small. Cannons, placed on high platforms, which were drawn along by white oxen and pushed from behind by elephants, opened a harmless fire upon the British lines, which were protected by a mud wall. Clive waited quietly for the enemy to attack him, and was indeed so cool in this hour of danger that he lay down to sleep, being very tired: but the army of the enemy was in fact a mere mob of men with matchlocks and spears, and they undertook no distinct movement. They loaded and fired, until a shower of rain wet their powder, and then they began to retreat; of this Clive took advantage, and captured some of their guns. The well-aimed fire of the English artillery turned their confusion into a flight—and the battle of Plassey, which gave Britain the fair province watered by the lower Ganges, was over.

One day, while Lord Clive was living in England, after earning fame in India and consolidating our Empire there, a lady, who was stopping at his house, asked him to make a pen for her. He took a penknife from his pocket, and did as she had requested. A little afterwards a servant came into the room, and found that he had killed himself with the small knife. The habit of drinking laudanum, to which he was greatly addicted, had probably affected his reason a good deal, before he committed this act of madness.

## XV.

## THE VICTORY AND DEATH OF WOLFE.

A YOUNG English General, named James Wolfe, who had risen to be a Colonel at the age of twenty-two, set out to ascend the St. Lawrence one summer, as soon as the ice of that river had broken up and floated down to the sea. Though at this time only thirty-one, he commanded a force of about 8000 men. Admiral Saunders accompanied him with a fleet of about forty ships, in certain of which were two men destined to future greatness in maritime glory. One was Jervis, who with Nelson's aid won the battle of St. Vincent—the other was James Cook, the great explorer of the Pacific. The object of the expedition was the capture of Quebec, the capital of Canada, which was then a French province.

Quebec stands on the point of a rocky projection, looking down the River St. Lawrence. The bank of the stream is high and craggy: and some miles below Quebec, in the centre, dividing the current into two branches, lies an island, called the Isle of Orleans. Opposite this island on the north bank of the river, a tributary called the Montmorenci, after leaping from a ledge of rock 250 feet high, flows quietly into the St. Lawrence.

From the camp, which Wolfe formed on the Isle of Orleans, the precipitous rock of Quebec could be seen. He soon took possession of a point, called Levi, on the south bank, from which he could pour red shot and shells into the town, setting the houses on fire. This however did little harm to the Citadel. For nearly two months Wolfe lay on the island and beside the Montmorenci, gaining little or no advantage in his attacks. Twice the British fleet was assailed by fire-ships, which came blazing down the stream at night, lighting up the woods and rocks with a red glare, which must have had a grand effect. But the British managed to get hold of these with grappling-irons, and towed them aside, till they had burned to the water's edge. It seemed to Wolfe, whose health was very frail, that he was destined to

die without achieving any good for his native country. Every landing-place and ledge of rock was guarded by floating batteries, for the French had a great many boats.

At last, as he sailed up the stream, examining the banks with a careful eye, he noticed a bay, from which a narrow winding path ran up the rocks towards the Plain of Abraham, as the table-land above the town was called. There were a few tents at the top of the path; but they were so few as to indicate a guard of only about 100 men. At this spot Wolfe resolved to land by night. His ships and men had been previously moved up the river for the purpose of drawing the attention of the enemy from what he was about to do. Having spent a day in preparing his men and giving them instructions, he rowed from one ship to another to see that all understood their duty. And, as the boat went softly under the September stars over the placid waters of the river, the mind of this accomplished man, who had studied literature as well as the art of war, turned to that verse of Gray's *Elegy*, which speaks of the common end, whither every road of life is directed,—

“The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
And all that beauty, all that youth e'er gave,  
Await alike the inevitable hour :  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.”

Repeating the last words aloud, a few hours before he received his death-wound, he seems to us almost as if he had been gifted with some prophetic power.

At one in the morning the boats, full of soldiers, were unmoored, and drifted slowly without noise down the current of the stream. No sail was set and no oar was used, a circumstance most favourable to a surprise. The ships soon followed in the same way to cover the landing. Some light infantry, leaping ashore, climbed up the face of the cliffs, swinging themselves from one ledge to another by means of the ash and maple trees that clothed the steep. Their duty was to dislodge the sentinels on the top, which they did by firing a few shots. The rest of the army then walked two abreast up the winding path; and at dawn Wolfe had them drawn out with a forest behind them on the lofty plain.

“It can only be a small party, come to burn a few houses

and then go away," said Montcalm, the French General, when he heard that men in British uniform were seen on the heights.

But he soon knew that it was the British army drawn up in order of battle. His own army was weak and small; but his spirit was undaunted. After some firing on both sides from a few little cannon, Montcalm led the French to the attack. But the ground was full of hollows and was crossed with rail-fences in many places, so that the soldiers in their advance fell into disorder and fired very irregularly. Wolfe had told his men not to pull a trigger, until the enemy were within forty yards of them; and consequently the discharge of the English muskets was very close and deadly. When Wolfe saw the lines shaking under the fire, he led his men rapidly forward with extended bayonets, and broke the hostile array completely.

In the advance a bullet struck his wrist: he received another in the body; but neither wound could stop him, until a third pierced his breast.

"Hold me up," said he to an officer, "do not let my brave fellows see me drop."

His head then drooped, and he almost swooned in the arms of those who were carrying him to the rear. While one of them was holding water to his lips, the officer, supporting him, cried out suddenly, "They run, they run."

"Who run?" asked the dying man, starting up with an effort, which brought the blood welling from his wounded breast.

"The French," was the reply, "are running everywhere."

"Do they run already?" said Wolfe, with his last words giving an order to make the victory complete, "then go to Colonel Burton and bid him cut off the fugitives with Webb's regiment. I die happy."

Equally brave and glorious was the way, in which Montcalm met his death. He too received a bullet in his body; and the surgeon told him it was a mortal wound.

"How long shall I live?" said he.

"Perhaps less than twelve hours."

"So much the better. I am very glad," exclaimed the gallant soldier, "for I shall not live to see the surrender of Quebec."

## XVI.

THE TEA-CHESTS OF BOSTON AND THE RIFLES OF  
LEXINGTON.

A SHIP once sailed into Boston Harbour on the North American shore, having a cargo of one hundred chests of tea. It came to anchor close to Griffin's Wharf. The people of the place, angry at taxation which the British Government was trying to impose upon them, determined that they would allow no tea, which was one of the things taxed, to be landed. They placed a guard on the wharf, with orders to ring the alarm-bell, if any attempt was made by night to bring the chests ashore. Two other ships, laden with tea, also arrived and were moored close by.

The intention of the people being to send all tea back to England, the merchant, to whom these cargoes had been consigned, influenced by the clamours of his townsmen, asked the Governor of the castle for a certificate of clearance, without which the ship could not leave the harbour. This demand was rejected by the Governor, who said haughtily that it would be dishonouring to the laws and the King to grant such a certificate. When this reply was announced in the public assembly of the citizens, a man in the gallery, who was dressed and painted like an Indian, gave a war-whoop, which brought the whole mass of people to their feet in an instant. They rushed down to the wharf; and then about twenty other men, who were really sailors or carpenters but who had disguised themselves in the costume of the red men, went on board the tea-ships with hammers and chisels in their hands, and in less than two hours broke open and emptied into the sea 340 chests. There was little noise, and no injury whatever was done to the ships or their crews. A great crowd stood on the wharf, watching "the harbour grow black;" and, when all was over, each man went home to think of the results likely to spring from a step so daring and decided.

One evening in the April of the following year a party of British officers left the city of Boston, which was then held for King George III. by General Gage, for the purpose, to all appearance, of dining at the town of Cambridge and passing a pleasant evening there. Their real object was to guard the roads, leading to Concord, lest any messengers from Boston might give warning, that a British force was coming that very night to seize and destroy the arms and ammunition, which had been collected there by the colonists. The precaution however was unavailing: for men, who knew the country, reached Lexington, where bells began to ring and cannon to fire the alarm, which soon spread far and wide. At eleven that night some grenadiers and light infantry left Boston, and by marching all night came near the scene of action about five in the morning. There was a small muster of the colonists on the road, and afterwards on the bridge north of the town of Concord; but they were driven from their position by the royal troops, who, entering the town, began to do what they had come to accomplish. They spiked—that is, hammered large nails into the touch-holes of—two twenty-four pound cannon; they threw a quantity of bullets into the river; and they destroyed a great many barrels of flour. During all this time the colonists were flocking from every quarter with their rifles in their hands, driving into Concord before their narrowing circle the light infantry, who had spread out as skirmishers on every side. Dead men, in British uniform and in American dress, strewed the fields already. The British then began their retreat, the line of which lay between clumps of trees and other places of shelter, of which the Americans took full advantage. The colonists were all used to shooting deer in the forests; and they now shot men with unerring aim. The officers dropped in great numbers under their bullets; and their knowledge of the country was of great advantage to them; for, after lying behind a hedge or a wall, picking off the British soldiers, as they marched wearily past in the sun and dust, they would run by a cross-cut through the fields and take their station at another point, from which they could send more bullets among the thinning ranks. If Gage had not sent two field-pieces and some soldiers to meet the

retreating force at Lexington, scarcely a man would have reached Boston to tell the story of the march.

These two incidents formed the prelude of what is called the American War, by which thirteen of our colonies between the Bay of Fundy and the Gulf of Mexico secured their independence. George Washington, a Virginian planter of Mount Vernon, was the hero of this struggle for independent national existence.



## XVII.

## THE DEATH OF LORD NELSON.

AFTER chasing the French and Spanish fleets across the Atlantic and back again, Admiral Lord Nelson caught them at a little distance from the sandhill in the south of Spain, which is called Cape Trafalgar.

Having given the signal to sail towards the enemy, this greatest of our many great sailors went down into his cabin and wrote a prayer. Soon afterwards his famous signal, "England expects every man to do his duty," which was greeted with loud cheers from every ship, was flying from the masthead of the *Victory*, in which he sailed. His captains tried in vain to persuade him not to lead the van; and tried also to induce him not to wear a coat, on the breast of which were sewed the gold-lace stars of the Bath. He kept up every sail upon his ship, lest the second vessel in the line might outstrip him; and he said it was too late to change the old frock-coat, on which the tarnished stars appeared.

His colleague Collingwood, leading the second line, went into action first; but Nelson was not long in finding his way into the heart of the conflict. As he sailed into action, a ball went through his sails, and then came a tempest of iron in every shape of shot or shell. As Nelson and Captain Hardy stood together on the quarter-deck, a cannon-ball passed between them, and a splinter from the wood, which it struck, tore the buckle off Hardy's shoe. Then said Nelson with a smile to Hardy,—

"This work is too warm, Hardy, to last long."

Through all this destructive fire the *Victory* answered not with a single gun. But, when she reached her foe, the *Bucentaur*, on board of which the French Admiral was thought to be, her fire opened with the discharge of a carronade, which carried a sixty-eight pound ball and a keg with five hundred bullets in it. The whole broadside of the *Victory* was then poured into the enemy. The rigging of

this vessel became entangled with that of a French ship, the *Redoubtable*. The cannonade went on, and both ships took fire. This was soon put out, but during all the confusion a number of men, stationed in the mizen-top of the French ship, continued to fire with muskets down upon the British deck. While Nelson was talking to Captain Hardy, a bullet passed through the epaulette on his left shoulder, and, penetrating downward, lodged in his spine. He fell forward on his knees, with his left hand—the only one he had—upon the deck; and then rolled over on his side.

"They have done for me at last, Hardy," he said to the Captain, who stooped down to ask him, if the wound was severe.

"I hope not," said Hardy.

"Yes!" said Nelson, "my backbone is shot through."

As they were carrying him down the ladder to the cockpit, he spread his handkerchief over his face and breast, that the sailors might not know he was hit. The surgeon found that the wound was mortal. It kept one or two men constantly busy to fan him with a sheet of paper, and wet his parched lips with lemonade. He begged the doctor not to waste attention on him, but to go to those, whose wounds were not mortal.

The noise of battle still went on above and around; and, as each French ship hauled down her flag in token of defeat, a burst of cheering rose from the *Victory's* crew, which roused the dying Admiral from his swoon of pain. Hardy could not stay below decks, but he came down, as often as he could, to report the progress of the action. At last he announced a complete success, saying that the smoke prevented him from seeing clearly, but that he believed fourteen or fifteen ships had struck their flags.

"That's well," said Nelson, "but I bargained for twenty." Then he suddenly said, in a loud voice, "Anchor, Hardy, anchor."

Hardy asked, should he not now look for orders from Admiral Collingwood?

"No!" said Nelson, "not while I live—I'll anchor if I live,"—a speech supposed to express his intention of

anchoring both ships and prizes at once, lest a gale might come on.

The Captain, whose eyes were full of tears, knelt and kissed his cheek and forehead.

"Now I am satisfied," said the hero. "Thank God, I have done my duty."

The signs of death now rapidly showed themselves; he ceased to have feeling in his lower limbs; and he died, three hours and a quarter after receiving the bullet.

## XVIII.

## WATERLOO.

A DUCHESS of Richmond gave a magnificent ball in her mansion at Brussels one lovely evening in June 1815. It was attended by nearly all the officers of the British army, then waiting to meet Napoleon in battle. At an early hour in the afternoon the Duke of Wellington, who commanded the forces, had heard the news that Napoleon was advancing, and had told it to his leading generals and staff-officers, desiring them however, when their preparations were all made, to dress and go to the ball, lest the ladies might suspect the truth and be alarmed. When the dancing was at its height, a careful eye might have seen officers in the rich uniform of the staff moving quietly about the ball-rooms and whispering orders to different Colonels, who a little later left the gay scene and hurried away to get their men under arms.

“The midnight brought the signal sound of strife,  
The morn, the marshalling in arms—the day,  
Battle’s magnificently stern array.”

The battle was that of Quatre Bras or Four Arms, a place which took its name from two roads, crossing at a point twenty miles south of Brussels; and in the conflict Wellington maintained his position against the attack of Ney. On the same day Napoleon drove the Prussians back from Ligny.

Next day Wellington fell back to Waterloo, which he had chosen to be the ground for a great decisive battle between Napoleon and himself.

The night before the battle of Waterloo was very wet. The soldiers lay down in the meadows and the rye-fields, sheltering themselves as well as they could, and trying to keep their fires lighting under the heavy rain. Before four o'clock the dawn was seen in the sky; and each army, when the damp mists permitted a clear view, saw the foe drawn out on a slightly raised ridge. Between the armies

a gentle hollow sloped and rose again. Down in the low ground next the British side there was a white farm-house, and another stood near the crest of the French position. At the western angle of the hill, occupied by the British, a chateau, built of red brick, formed a fortress, which was garrisoned by many soldiers. Round these three buildings, especially the last, the battle raged hottest.

There was great difficulty at first on both sides in getting the muskets ready for action, for the rain had soaked the cartridges in the loaded barrels, so that they would not fire. And when the soldiers, turning their ramrods, tried to screw out the charge, it was so swelled with damp, that it would not yield. It seemed at one time, as if there was to be no battle, or a battle without musketry. However an English sergeant found that, by taking his gun by the stock and whirling it round his head, the cartridge became loose and gradually came out. His example was followed; and all along both lines of battle groups of men were seen wheeling their guns round their heads, as if they were going to hurl them away.

The battle began about half-past eleven in the morning. Even the Duke of Wellington, who won it, and who was engaged all day in directing the movements of the British army and wishing earnestly that "either night or Blucher the Prussian General, would come," had a very confused idea, after all was over, of the details of the fight. Napoleon's plan of attack was to open a heavy fire of cannon upon the British array, and then to send forward at full gallop regiment after regiment of horse-soldiers—some, called cuirassiers, defended by steel breastplates—some carrying lances—and some having the loose jacket of the hussar, with its rich gold-lace and fur, hanging at their shoulders. The method, taken by the British to meet these fierce charges, was the formation of squares. With the front rank kneeling, the second stooping, and the third and inmost standing erect, all with extended bayonets, each square presented a hedge of bristling points, through which the French cavalry tried in vain to force or cut their way. It was a hard task for the British soldiers to bear these attacks all day without moving to meet the foe; yet they endured this; and, when the round-

shot and the grape cut through the sides of the squares, the men just closed up the gap, and made the front a little shorter. About four o'clock the bearskin caps of the Prussians were seen coming out of a wood to the east.' Napoleon seems to have thought, that a junction between the British and Prussian armies was impossible; and, when he saw the approach of the latter, he must have known that his defeat was certain. Yet he tried a last resource. The Old Guard, composed of the flower of his tried veterans, old enough to have acquired skill and steadiness, yet not old enough to have lost anything of their manly fire and vigour, assembled and formed. He led them himself to the foot of the ridge, and then committed them to Ney. With firm and swift tread they went up the slope; but, before they had reached the top, a body of English soldiers, four deep, rose into sight from a place, where they had been lying down, and poured into the ascending column so close and deadly a shower of balls, that the French became confused and disordered and soon ran down the hill. When Napoleon saw the effect of the British fire upon this advance, he cried out, "They are mixed together," and rode away to the rear. Wellington was then engaged in galloping, as fast as his horse could go, towards the front of the line, to direct the final movements, which swept the wreck of the French army completely from the field.

## XIX.

## THE GROWTH OF THE LOCOMOTIVE.

A LITTLE boy, who used to earn a few pence a day by herding cows in the fields of Dewley Burn in Northumberland, for his father's wages, as the fireman of a steam-engine attached to the coal-mines there, were very small, collected a quantity of mud one afternoon, and, cutting the stiff tubular stalks of a hemlock-plant, built of the two a model of his father's engine. His name was George Stephenson.

We see him next at the age of eighteen, holding a position similar to his father's, and taking advantage of his situation to study every bar and rivet of the engine under his charge. On Saturday afternoon, when other men were idling or wasting their wages, young George would shut himself up in the engine-room, take the machinery to pieces, and polish with loving care every speck of rust or stain of the week's work from the gleaming surface of the steel cylinders.

By-and-by he added the repairing of clocks and watches to his other means of gain; and his little son Robert used to stand by with eyes of eager childish interest, and was delighted beyond measure, when his father allowed him to stand on a chair, and put on the hand of a clock that was under repair. Father and son thus began a partnership in mechanical pursuits, which lasted until death dissolved it.

One day it came to the ears of George Stephenson, that the engine of a new coal-pit, intended for the purpose of pumping the water out of the shaft, would not work. When his labour was over, he went to see the machinery that had failed, and examined it carefully, until he found the cause of the failure. He then told the engineer that he could make it work; and, as everything had been tried to no purpose and it seemed that George could do it no harm by trying once more, he was allowed to take it to pieces. So successful was he in this first attempt at engine-curing, that

in four days it was in fine working order, and the men were down at the bottom of a shaft, which had previously been full of water.

The next scene of Stephenson's life was the town of Killingworth, where he obtained the situation of engine-wright. Railways or tram-roads had long been laid between the mouths of the coal-pits and the wharfs, where the ships received their grimy cargoes; but the trucks had always been drawn slowly and laboriously by horses. The notion of employing steam to do this work had already been suggested; but the grand difficulty in the way of achieving this seemed to be, that the smooth iron wheels of an engine, being turned by steam, would slip round instead of rolling the engine forward. Stephenson, thinking over this difficulty, saw that it was merely a fancy, and, having tried some experiments, found that the weight of the ponderous mass of metal, that goes to make an engine, would press the rails sufficiently to give the wheels a hold. Lord Ravensworth came to his aid with money, and, some time afterwards, on the tram-road of Killingworth men witnessed the novel sight of a small Locomotive, drawing a weight of thirty tons *up* a rather steep inclined plane at the rate of four miles an hour. Once the fact, that an engine, worked by steam, could be applied to locomotion, was distinctly ascertained, the progress of improvement was very rapid. Stephenson's second Locomotive turned the chimney into a kind of bellows, by sending the waste steam into it for the purpose of increasing the draught and making the fire blaze brighter, which of course increased the volume of steam and thus quickened the speed of the engine.

A railway from Liverpool to Manchester was soon projected, George Stephenson being appointed engineer. The principal obstacle consisted in a morass, called Chat Moss, which lay in the way. But this was nothing to the invincible energy of Stephenson, who poured a quantity of rubbish and earth into the shaking bog, until it became dry and firm, where he wished to lay the rails across it. When the line was nearly finished, there arose a question as to the kind of engine, which was to be employed in drawing the carriages, whether it was to be a Locomotive, or a stationary



engine. Stephenson advocated the use of Locomotives; and, when the directors of the line offered a premium of £500 for the best engine, that would run *ten* miles an hour and not weigh more than six tons, he made an engine, called the *Rocket*, which went at the rate of *twenty-nine* miles an hour on the opening day. This event happened in the autumn of 1830, during the parliamentary vacation; and most of the chief statesmen assembled to go upon the trial trip. It cost one of them his life, for during a temporary stoppage of the train Mr. Huskisson and the Duke of Wellington, who had got out of the carriages to talk and were standing on the line, heard a rattling noise and a sudden shout, and, turning, saw an engine coming quickly down upon them. Wellington got out of the way; but Huskisson, who had been ill, was weak and nervous, and did not move fast enough. The engine caught him, threw him down, and crushed his leg so severely that he died the same night.

After this wealth and honour flowed in upon George Stephenson. But he preferred his unadorned name to the dignity of knighthood, which was offered to him more than once. To him and his energetic son and partner we owe our Locomotive and our Railway System.

## XX.

## THE FATAL VOYAGE OF FRANKLIN.

In the spring of 1845 two ships—the *Erebus* and the *Terror*—having on board 134 men, left the Thames for the Arctic regions. The commander of the expedition was Sir John Franklin, then a man of fifty-nine, who had been tried in many different spheres of action and had won honour in them all. He had explored the icy barren lands of North America—had fought at Copenhagen and Trafalgar—and had ruled wisely the turbulent colonists of Van Diemen's Land. The object of his present search was the discovery of that North West Passage into the Pacific Ocean, which had continued from the days of Queen Elizabeth to those of Queen Victoria to exercise a powerful fascination on the minds of British mariners, although for commercial purposes such a passage would be useless owing to the ice.

Although the greater portion of Franklin's voyage is a blank to us on account of its fatal termination, yet we can partly fill the blank, because we know from many log-books and diaries the sights, which fill an Arctic voyager with wonder and with fear.

Ships, sailing round Cape Farewell, which is the southernmost point of Greenland, meet a floating mass of worn and ragged pine-logs, drifting along in what is called the Spitzbergen Current. Then there comes a sudden fall in the temperature of the sea, and a whitish haze is seen on the horizon, which under the name of the *ice-blink* betokens the nearness of a pack or floes of ice. Proceeding up Davis' Straits into Baffin's Bay, ships are in the habit of touching at harbours like Goodhaab and Holsteinborg, where they take in Eskimo dogs for the sledge-journeys and increase their supplies of food by purchasing dried codfish, salmon, ptarmigans, and other such things. When they meet a flock of eider-duck or looms, the guns begin to slay with shot, and no opportunity

of adding seal-beef to the stock of provisions is allowed to pass. The larder lies in the rigging, which, as the ship advances and the frost grows more intense, assumes a strange look from the quantity of frozen food, hanging there until the season, when living creatures shall have disappeared. At last the dense cold white fogs surround the ship; and except now and then a solitary white bear upon an iceberg, every moving thing is gone. The long night sets in, when for months there is only a faint flicker of daylight in the southern horizon about noon. The ice closes round the ship; she can make no way even by blasting with gunpowder; the rudder is unshipped; and preparations must be made for facing the wintry darkness, and the uncertainty of being drifted away in the centre of the enormous *pack*, as a field of ice is called. The ship is covered with canvas, and snow is heaped over this. A dim candle lights the cabin, where the men sit reading, till their books are learned by heart, and telling stories, till these grow stale and tiresome. A school is set up—perhaps a theatre, and a newspaper. Football on the ice, when there is light enough, affords a wholesome exercise for frozen limbs; and an occasional bear-hunt breaks the monotony of the daily life. There is often a sadder break in the dull sameness, when one of the crew dies, and a mournful procession passes with a sledge across the ice towards a fissure in the floe, through which the body is committed to the deep. Never does the distant groaning of the ice, which seldom ceases to sound its sad undertone, seem so sad as then!

At last the ice breaks up, to the imminent danger of the ship, which every moment runs the risk, as a describer of such a scene has graphically said, of “being knocked into lucifer matches.” And once more the hearts of the imprisoned crew bound with joy, as the vessel sails along freely in the deep blue water. But the summer is very short; ice may again seize the ship in his cold grasp; and timber cannot stand his grinding and squeezing very long.

It was not until Sir John Franklin had been dead for two and twenty years, that any news of his fate was discovered. The steam-yacht *Fox*, commanded by M’Clintock, after suffering perils like those I have described, returned

with certain tidings of his death and the destruction of the whole expedition.

Starting from his wintering place in Bellot Straits, and sending his officers in different directions, M'Olintock continued the search for Franklin by exploring the island called King William's Land in sledges drawn by the Eskimo dogs. He had already received information from the natives, for which he had been led to ask by seeing a *navy button* on the seal-skin dress of one, and observing others with *silver spoons* and *forks*, which they said they had got from two wrecks. The search conducted by Lieutenant Hobson proved successful. Near Cape Felix he found a cairn, round which lay clothing and blankets; and at Cape Victoria he discovered another heap of stones, in the top of which was a tin canister with papers, while from the neighbouring ground he picked up a sextant, engraved with a name. In another place he found a boat, covered with snow, with two skeletons lying in the bottom. One of them was covered with clothes. Watches, money, Bibles lay scattered round; and a couple of guns, with one barrel of each loaded and cocked, spoke sadly, though silently, of the eager longing, with which the dead men had looked out over the snow for a bear or a fox. Some tea and chocolate were found; but these alone could not sustain life in the regions of ice.

From the record, and the relics, and such scanty information as the natives could give, the end of Franklin's voyage may be faintly gathered in outlines, which are too true.

Having ascended Wellington Channel as far as they could, the *Erebus* and the *Terror* came southward to Beechy Island, where they spent their first winter. In the early autumn of 1846 they were locked up in a pack of ice, from which they never got free again. Sir John died in April 1847; and the imprisoned ships, wedged firmly into a continent of ice, went drifting southward at the rate of *a mile a month*. In nineteen months they had advanced just the same number of miles. At last Captain Crozier with 105 survivors abandoned the ships to their fate. One of them was crushed by the ice: the other drifted ashore on King William's Land in the following autumn. Crozier's party, sick and hungry, then went over the ice towards the estuary

of the Great Fish River; but they had only forty days' food; and, as they walked along, here and there one of them dropped from the hopeless march—to die. Those, who survived to reach Montreal Island, had only the miserable satisfaction of enduring a few days more of misery, for there the last of the party ceased to live.

Yet in the sadness of the broken story there will always be a gleam of glorious light, for these martyrs of science had achieved the discovery of the North West Passage, before the fatal ice shut them in. Captain M'Clure made the same discovery in a later year, and brought home the news to Britain, before the fate of Franklin was discovered.

## XXI.

## THE SIEGE OF SEBASTOPOL.

WHAT we call the Crimean War was the principal part of a war with Russia, in which France and England took part together ten years ago. And in the Crimean war the siege of Sebastopol was the great event.

Sebastopol lies near the southern point of the peninsula called the Crimea, and was fortified at great cost of money, time, and labour by several of the Czars. A natural cleft in the western coast forms a fine harbour, and the city lies on both sides of this inlet. However the greater part of the city is upon the south side.

Sailing across a portion of the Black Sea from the shore of Turkey, the armies of France and England landed on the Crimea at Eupatoria Bay. They then marched southward towards Sebastopol. However the Russians were not inclined to let them form the siege without a battle, and accordingly, when they came to the River Alma, they had to fight a battle, to which the stream has given its name.

As the soldiers marched towards the scene of conflict, about to break with the thunder of war a peace of nearly forty years, we are told that the air was filled with the scent of an aromatic weed, which carried the thoughts of many a young recruit away to the green lanes and village church of his native shire. The first person killed in the English army was an artillery-man, who bent forward, as he was sitting upon a gun-carriage, and was found to have been struck by a shot. The battle of the Alma resulted in the defeat of the Russians; and the French and English armies, forming their lines on the south side of Sebastopol, began the siege.

Having placed their cannon in position, the two armies began a bombardment; the French drawing their supplies of food and ammunition from the harbour of Kamiesch—the British from the more distant port of Balaklava.

In an attempt, which the Russians made to break through

the British line near Balaklava, the 93d Highlanders, led by Sir Colin Campbell, repelled the attack by charging the grey-coated foemen in a thin red line. Then too occurred that famous charge of the Light Brigade, which Alfred Tennyson has celebrated in words of poetic fire. Little more than six hundred Light Horsemen, ordered to advance by some unexplained mistake, rode a mile under a most terrific fire for the purpose of saving a few guns; and only about two hundred returned to the starting-place.

The great battle of Inkermann took place on the day dedicated in England to fireworks and Guy Fawkes. It was a Sunday. All the previous night the bells of Sebastopol were ringing, and a heavy rolling sound, which the British sentinels could not understand, was heard to the right, where the caves and cliffs of Inkermann lay. Through the morning fog and drizzling rain a vast host of Russians came stealing up the slopes, dragging with them ninety large cannon, in the hope of surprising the British. The outposts fired their muskets; and soon along the whole of the British lines were heard the beating of drums and the noise of men hurrying to the place of conflict. All day the battle raged, especially round the Sandbag Battery. Officers and soldiers fought alike, for in the hurry there was no time to form a plan of battle. The grand object our men had was to keep the Russians from coming up the heights, or turning the flank of the line; and in this object they succeeded nobly. Late in the day the French came to the aid of the almost exhausted British troops, and then the Russians retreated.

The winter spent by our troops in the trenches before Sebastopol was a time of dreadful suffering, partly caused by the mismanagement of those who had charge of the supplies of food and clothing. Before the winter was over, a railway of six miles was made between the harbour at Balaklava and the English lines; but the worst of the suffering was past by the time that it was finished.

After the fourth bombardment the French and the British made an attack upon the Malakoff and the Redan, two of the most important fortresses of the Russians, which had been greatly strengthened by earthworks. In some respects the earthwork is superior to fortifications of stone, for

the shot, plunging in, instead of splintering it, adds to the strength of the rampart. The day chosen for this attack was the anniversary of Waterloo—a day on which, forty years earlier, the nations, now in alliance against Russia, had contended in war upon that Belgian plain. In spite of the day and the men who made the attack the enterprise failed.

Early in autumn the last bombardment began; and preparations were made for assaulting these forts again. The works in the meantime had been made thrice as strong. The French troops went skilfully and cautiously to work, and the General took care, that every detail of the plan of attack was complete, and that every man knew exactly what he was to do. The result of this care was that they took the Malakoff—a white tower, rising from a pile of earthworks—in a quarter of an hour; and, although the Russians fired on them for hours with every gun that could be brought to bear upon their position, they held their ground victoriously.

As soon as the *tricolor* flag was seen flying on the Malakoff, announcing with its stripes of red, white, and blue, that the French were victorious, a thousand British soldiers clambered out of the trenches, where they had been waiting, and rushed towards the Redan. This fortress, which was in the form of a pair of compasses, opened rather wide, stood with the angle turned towards the British lines. There was this difference between the English and the French attacks, that the French engineers had dug their trenches to within a very few yards of the Malakoff, while the British had to run 200 yards, before they reached the Redan. The moment they showed their heads the Russian fire began, and during their race across the open ground a great number were killed. When the rest had climbed over the parapet into the Redan, they found themselves in an angle of a triangle, whose three sides were lined with cannon and rifles, and these opened a deadly fire at once. It was impossible to advance—it would be inglorious to retreat—yet there was no prospect of reinforcements and no shelter from the storm of balls. The man, who displayed most coolness and valour at this trying moment, was Colonel Windham, ever since called the Hero of the Redan. He tried to form his men—he went fearlessly about among the flying balls—he ventured across that fatal



space of 200 yards, now strewn with dead and wounded, for the purpose of leading the reinforcements to the Redan. But, while he was away, some, becoming afraid to stay, leaped down and ran back to the trenches. Men at such a time are like a flock of frightened sheep; what one or two may do, is by an irresistible impulse followed by the rest. These British soldiers felt their hearts fail them, and they all fled.

The result was just the same, as if they had remained; for that night the Russians, setting fire to the city, crossed the harbour-bridge to the northern suburb. The siege was now in reality over, although the war was not finished for some months.

## XXII.

## THE DEFENCE AND RELIEF OF LUCKNOW.

ON the evening of the 30th of May 1857 Sir Henry Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of Oude, was sitting in the Residency of Lucknow at dinner with his staff, when shots were heard, and a sepoy came running in to tell that a mutiny had begun in the lines. It was not unexpected, for news of the outbreak at Meerut had been already received, and preparations to meet a similar emergency had been made. The Residency, a fine brick building on a hill, and the Fish House, a fortress by the river Goomtee, were strengthened by trenches and stockades, and mounted with cannon and those large blunderbusses, moving on pivots, which are called in India *jingals*.

The mutiny soon broke out in earnest. The men killed their officers, and the wholesale murder of women and children stained the land with innocent blood. When trust was placed in the promises and oaths of the mutineers, the result was quite the same. A whole band of women and children, who had confided themselves to a treacherous escort, were shot, as they were kneeling and singing a hymn.

During all June active preparations went on for the defence of the Residency, and on the last day of the month Sir Henry Lawrence, having heard that the mutinous natives were collecting round the city in vast numbers, resolved to go out and give them battle, before they entered the suburbs. Starting about six in the morning with 600 men, eight guns, and a howitzer for throwing shells, Sir Henry advanced to Chinhutt; but the fire from the vast masses of the foe was so tremendous, and his force was so weakened by the desertion of natives, that he was forced to retreat, with the loss of the howitzer and three guns. More fatal than either lead or steel, however, to his little force was the burning sun, which struck dozens down as they retreated towards the Residency. Their powder too

ran short, owing to the treachery of native drivers; and more than once they were forced to point *empty* guns at the advancing foe. Retreating within the works of the Residency, the small band of defenders prepared for putting forth their utmost energies, while the mutineers, swarming into the city, broke loopholes in the walls of the houses, and commenced a hot fire upon the Europeans. Then the siege began.

Everything was applied to the urgent purposes of the defence. Barricades were made of furniture and even of costly Oriental books. The Fish House was abandoned; and, just as its garrison got within the Residency gates, a terrific explosion told that the fuse they had lighted, before starting on this dangerous march, had burned down and ignited the powder magazines.

The position of the little garrison was rendered worse by the death of Sir Henry Lawrence, who was struck by a bursting shell, discharged from his own howitzer, which the rebels had captured at Chinhutt.

The scene within the defences of the Residency was pitiable in the extreme, for the shot of the besiegers swept the whole place, and many were killed in their beds. At first there was a plentiful supply even of luxuries such as pickled salmon, truffled sausages, and champagne; but, as week passed after week, food began to fail; and the besieged were soon reduced to live on unsifted husks of corn, black slippery lentils, flavoured with bitter salt, and, every second day, a few ounces of coarse beef, half bones. A failure in the supply of soap also reduced the ladies and children to a state of great discomfort, for they could wash properly neither their clothes nor themselves. The decaying bodies filled the air with a horrible stench, and also attracted clouds of black flies, which swarmed on everything eatable, and tormented every person with their incessant stinging. An occasional fall of heavy rain purified the city for a while; but, as fifteen or twenty were shot and buried in a day, the enclosure of the Residency soon became like a graveyard.

The besiegers, meanwhile, kept up an incessant fire, mingled with continual shouting and the blowing of bugles. Brigadier Inglis, who succeeded Lawrence in directing the defence, fortunately had a skilful officer of engineers, Cap-

tain Fulton, to assist him in countermining the excavations, with which the soil all round the Residency was bored like a piece of honeycomb. Now and then an explosion would stun the ears of the anxious garrison; but the genius of Fulton prevented the mining of the rebels from producing any very serious breach in the works.

As a specimen of the cunning and skill, with which the rebels directed their fire, the following instance will serve. Upon a clock-tower, surmounting a gateway, which commanded the Residency, an African sharp-shooter established himself with his rifle and a telescope. There he sat perched on high, watching most patiently, until he saw a man in an exposed position, when a little jet of smoke would issue from the loophole of the tower, and the poor object of his aim would stagger and fall, dead or desperately wounded. This happened so often, that the artillery were desired to throw shells at the tower for the special purpose of killing this marksman. A shell was thrown, and a little ring of smoke showed that it had burst just in the place, where the negro was in the habit of standing; and yet, immediately after, a rifle-ball came whistling as usual from the loophole. Another shell was thrown, and another, and another—all with the same result. It seemed as if the man was shell-proof, for the precision of the firing was very exact, and it appeared to the besieged that he could not possibly escape the splinters. The secret came out after the Residency was relieved. Whenever he saw through his telescope, that a shell was about to be thrown, he went down a ladder into a cavern, which he had hollowed out as a place of refuge, and waited there until the shell had burst: then, climbing to his post again, he fired his rifle and brought down his man. He was killed at last and was found lying dead, with his rifle and his telescope beside him.

In September Captain Fulton, the engineer, was killed by a cannon-ball, which took his head off: but, before that month had closed, a letter reached the besieged, telling them the welcome news that a force under Sir James Outram was marching to relieve them; and next day a faint sound of cannon in the direction of Cawnpore seemed to announce the approach of their deliverers. Great agitation and hurry

among the enemy in the city confirmed this hope; and in the night, that followed, the flashing of the guns, seven miles off, was distinctly seen. Next day officers in shooting coats and men in blue trousers were seen in the streets of Lucknow, fighting their way towards the Residency under a fire from every window and every roof. And then at sight of their friends cheers rose and redoubled from every trench and battery within the shattered works of the Residency.

Their deliverers had started from Cawnpore, where a little earlier Brigadier Neill, having driven the cruel Nana Sahib from the place, had found a floor black with clotted blood and strewed with bunches of hair, walls marked with the bloody fingers of little children, who were cut up and roasted before their mothers' eyes—the whole place reeking with the traces of massacre. Gathering a force at Cawnpore, General Havelock set out to relieve Lucknow, but was obliged to retreat. Sir James Outram then came to reinforce him; and, as his superior officer, might have superseded him in the command. But Outram was too noble for this. Saying that it would be unfair to deprive Havelock of a glory, for which he had toiled so hard, he placed himself under that General's orders, and together they set out with 2500 men.

Mile after mile the gallant force advanced under torrents of tropical rain, exposed almost continually to a deadly fire. A brick palace, standing in a garden called the Alumbagh, formed the first great stronghold of the enemy, but it was taken. Then approaching the city, they had to fight their way from wall to wall and garden to garden. A cunning trap, consisting of a ditch covered with thin bamboos, was laid before one of the strongest batteries for our troops, who, the natives thought, would try to storm the place with a rush. But they made a circuit, which saved them from this snare. In spite of a terrific fire from the Kaiser-bagh or King's Palace, Havelock forced his way into the Residency amid the almost frantic joy of the besieged.

General Neill, a very gallant officer, had just got inside the intrenchments of the Residency, when he heard that some of our cannon were in danger of being captured, and, as he was galloping out to rescue them, a bullet struck him in the head, and killed him.

There were then some days of plunder, during which our men loaded themselves with silks and jewels, curious weapons, china cups, ivory telescopes, and a thousand other rare and costly things. But it soon became manifest that the siege was not over—in fact that the deliverers of the Residency were blockaded with those, whom they had come to relieve.

The incidents of this second period of the siege were different in no respect from those of the first, except that there were many more mouths to feed without any additional food for the purpose. There were 800 wounded and 410 women and children now within the trenches. September ended—October passed by—and November had begun, before a gleam of hope shone upon the disappointed and heart-sick defenders of this fortress by the Goomtee. At last one day the Union Jack was seen flying from the Alumbagh; and the news, that Sir Colin Campbell had got so far on his way to rescue them, diffused new hope through their sinking hearts.

It was then that a clerk named Kavanagh volunteered to carry plans of the city and its approaches to Sir Colin. This brave man, gaining the assistance of a native spy, smeared his face and hands with lamp black, and dressed himself in white muslin and yellow chintz, like an irregular soldier of the city. Wading the river and threading the narrow streets of Lucknow, they got into the green fields, where Kavanagh ate a raw carrot with intense relish. His shoes galled his feet, as the two made their way for eighteen miles under the light of the moon, and the paint was washed from his hands and partly from his face in wading through a weedy swamp; but he urged his timid companion on, and, after being questioned by several sentinels and patrols, delivered the letter, which he had carried in the folds of his turban, safely to Sir Colin. There was great joy in Lucknow, when a signal-flag on the Alumbagh told of his safe arrival; and no one felt deeper joy than his wife, from whom he had concealed the dangerous enterprise.

Sir Colin then advanced by a circuitous route, which took him to the eastward of the city; and by storming a fortified building, called the Secundrabagh, opened a clear way to the Residency, now in reality relieved. The sight of the fami-

liar red coats appeared in buildings, where nothing but the dreadful spectacle of rebels had long been visible ; and anxious eyes, dim with tears of thankfulness and joy, watched their approach, as they drove the lurking foes out of every house and place of shelter. This final relief took place on the 17th of November ; after which Sir Colin Campbell lost no time in escorting the rescued women and children to a place of safety.

The joy of the relief was suddenly clouded by the death of General Havelock. Worn out with toils, his meagre frame sank under an attack of dysentery ; and he died within a few miles of the city, which he had relieved and afterwards had helped to defend. His character, although bright with the lustre of military genius, shines with a holier light ; for he was a devout and consistent Christian, and never went on any service of difficulty or danger without kneeling to ask God's help in the enterprise.

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